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THE
ABBÉ CONSTANTIN

A MARRIAGE FOR LOVE

AND

OTHER STORIES.

By LUDOVIC HALEY.



TRANSLATED BY

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THE ABBÉ CONSTANTIN.

I.

WITH a step vigorous and firm, an old priest was walking along the dusty highway in the full glare of a noonday sun. For more than thirty years the Abbé Constantin had been curé of the little village that reposed in the plain, beside the bank of a narrow stream, called the Lizotte.

The Abbé Constantin had been walking for the past quarter of an hour, beneath the wall of the chateau of Longueval; he arrived in front of the high, massive, iron entrance gates, which hung on huge old stone pillars, brown and rusty with time. The curé stopped and gazed sadly at the two immense blue placards which were pasted on the gate posts.

The placards announced that on Wednesday, the 18th of May, 1881, at one o'clock in the afternoon, the domain of Longueval, divided into four parcels, would be sold by auction, at the courthouse of Souvigny.

1st. The chateau of Longueval and its dependencies, sheets of water, vast commons, with its park of three hundred acres, entirely enclosed in walls and watered by the river Lizotte : valued at six hundred thousand francs.

2nd. The farm of Blanche-Couronne, six hundred acres : valued at five hundred thousand francs.

3rd. The farm of La Rozeraie, five hundred acres : valued at four hundred thousand francs.

4th. The forests and timber lands of La Mionne, containing about nine hundred acres, and valued at five hundred and fifty thousand francs.

And these four amounts added at the bottom of the poster gave the respectable sum of two millions and fifty thousand francs.

Thus was it to be divided, this magnificent estate, which for two centuries had escaped division, and had always been handed down intact from father to son in the family of Longueval. The placard, indeed, announced that after the provisional adjudication of the four parcels, there would be an opportunity to re-unite them, and setting a price on the whole estate, but it was a very large tract, and in all probability no buyer would appear.

The Marchioness of Longueval had been dead six months ; in 1873 she lost her only son, Robert de Longueval ; the three heirs were the grandchildren

of the marchioness, Pierre, Hélène and Camille. They were forced to sell the estate. Hélène and Camille were minors. Pierre, a young man about twenty-three years old, had been a spendthrift, was half ruined, and could not dream of buying Longueval.

It was noon. In an hour there would be a new master for the old chateau of Longueval. And who would this master be? What woman would take, at the fireside in the grand salon hung with antique tapestries, the place of the marchioness, the old friend of the country curé? It was she who repaired the village church; it was she who supplied and maintained the dispensary, kept at the parsonage by Pauline, the curé's servant; it was she who twice a week came with her big landau heaped full of children's clothes and flannels, to take the Abbé Constantin out with her, on what she called *a hunt for the poor*.

Thinking of all this the old priest resumed his walk—and then he also thought—the greatest saints have their little weaknesses—he also thought of his cherished habits of thirty years, so suddenly broken up. Every Thursday and Sunday he was accustomed to dine at the chateau. How he was indulged, petted, spoiled. Little Camille—she was eight years old—would sit on his knee and say to him :

"You know, Monsieur le Curé, that I am going to be married in your church, and grandmamma will send flowers enough to fill the whole church, fuller than for the month of Mary. It will be like a big garden, all white, all white, all white!"

The month of Mary! So it was the month of Mary. Formerly, at this season, the altar was almost hidden under the flowers brought from the greenhouses at the chateau. This year there were only a few poor bouquets of May-lilies and white lilacs in the gilded porcelain vases on the altar. Formerly, every Sunday at high mass, and every evening during the month of Mary, Mademoiselle Hébert, Madame Longueval's companion, played the little harmonium given by the marchioness. To-day the silenced harmonium no longer accompanies the voices of the choristers, and the hymns of the children.

Mademoiselle Marbeau, the directress of the post, was a little musical, and in her heart would have been willing to take the place of Mademoiselle Hébert; but she did not dare, she was afraid to be called priest-ridden, and denounced by the mayor, who was a free-thinker. That might injure her chances of advancement.

Here the park wall ended, this park whose every path was familiar to the old curé. The road now

followed the banks of the Lizotte, and on the other side of the little river the meadows of the two farms stretched away, and beyond them the lofty forests of La Mionne. Divided—the estate was going to be divided ! This thought broke the poor priest's heart. For him, all this had been kept together these thirty years. It was in a measure his property, his affair, this great estate. He felt himself at home on the soil of Longueval. More than once it had happened that he stopped complacently by some immense field of wheat, to pluck a blade, shake out the grain, and say to himself :

“ Ah ! the grain is fine, firm and well filled. We will have a good harvest this year.” And he would go on his way contentedly, across *his* fields, *his* pastures and *his* meadows. In short, by everything in his life, by all his habits, by all his memories, he was attached to his domain whose last hour had come.

The abbé could see, at a distance, the farm of Blanche Couronne ; its red-tiled roof stood out against the verdure of the forest. There, the curé still felt at home. Bernard, the marchioness' farmer, was his friend ; and when at nightfall the old priest had been detained in his visits to the poor and sick and was a little weary of limb and empty of stomach, he stopped, supped with Bernard, regaled himself

with a good dish of bacon and potatoes, emptied his mug of cider; then, after supper, the farmer harnessed his old black mare to his little chaise and took the abbé back to Longueval. All along the way they gossiped and quarreled. The curé reproached the farmer for not coming to mass, and he would reply :

“The wife and daughters go there for me. You know very well, Monsieur le Curé, that that is the way it is with us. Women have religion for the men. They will open the gates of paradise for us.”

“And,” he added roguishly, giving the black mare a little touch with his whip: “If there be one!”

The curé bounded on his seat in the old cabriolet. “What! If there be one? But there certainly is one!”

“Then you will be there, Monsieur le Curé. You say that it is sure—and I tell you that if—you will be there! You will be there, at the gate watching for your parishioners and continuing your interest in all our little affairs. And you will say to St. Peter, for it is St. Peter, isn’t it, who hold the keys of paradise?”

“Yes, it is St. Peter.”

“Well! you will say to St. Peter, if he wants to shut the door in my face, under the pretext that I

did not go to mass, you will say, 'Oh, let him in just the same. This is Bernard, one of the marchioness' farmers, a good fellow. He belonged to the municipal council, and he voted for the support of the sisters when they wanted to break up their schools. That will touch St. Peter, who will reply 'Ah, well! go on, pass in, Bernard; but it is only to please M. le Curé.' For you will still be curé up there, and curé of Longueval. It would be very cheerless for you in paradise if you could not still be curé of Longueval."

Curé of Longueval. Yes; all his life he had been nothing else, had never dreamed of being anything else, had never desired to be anything else. Three or four times he had been offered one of the large curés of the canton, with a good income, with one or two curates. He had refused. He loved his little church, his little village, his little parsonage. He was there alone, contented, doing everything himself, he was always rambling over hill and dale, in sunshine and in rain, in wind and in hail. His body was hardened to fatigue, but his soul remained sweet and tender. He lived in his parsonage, a large country house, separated from the church only by the churchyard. When the curé stood on a ladder to nail up the branches of his peach trees and pear trees, he could look over the wall and see

the graves, over which he had said the last prayer, and cast in the first shovelful of earth. Then, while he went on with his gardening, he said a little prayer for the repose of those of his dead about whom he was anxious, and who might yet remain in purgatory. He had a simple, peaceful faith.

But among the tombs there was one which, more often than the others, had his visits and his prayers. It was the tomb of his old friend, Doctor Reynaud, who died in his arms in 1871, and under what circumstances? The doctor was like Bernard—he never went to mass, and he never went to confession: but he was so good, so charitable, so compassionate for all who were suffering! This was the great subject of the curé's meditation, his great anxiety. His friend Reynaud, where was he? Then he recalled the noble life of the country doctor, all courage and self-denial; he recalled his death, above all things his death! and he said to himself:

“In paradise! he must be in paradise! The good God may perhaps have given him a little purgatory—for form's sake—but he must have taken him out at the end of five minutes.”

All these things passed through the old curé's mind as he kept on his way toward Souvigny. He was going to the town to see the marchioness'

lawyer, to learn the result of the sale, and find out who the new masters of Longueval were to be; the abbé had still about a quarter of a mile to go before reaching the outskirts of Souvigny; he was walking just outside the park wall of Lavardens, when he heard voices above his head calling:

“Monsieur le Curé! Monsieur le Curé!” At this point a long row of linden trees bordered a terrace, and the abbé raising his head saw Madame de Lavardens and her son Paul.

“Where are you going, Monsieur le Curé?” asked the countess.

“To Souvigny, to the courthouse, to learn.”

“Stay here—M. de Larnac is coming immediately after the sale to tell me the result.”

The Abbé Constantin went up the terrace. Gertrude de Lannilis, countess of Lavardens, had been very unfortunate. At eighteen she committed a folly, the only one of her life, but irreparable. She married for love, in a transport of enthusiasm and disinterestedness, M. de Lavardens, one of the most fascinating and witty men of the time. He did not love her, and married her only from necessity—he had spent the last penny of his patrimony, and for three or four years had kept himself up in the world by all sorts of expedients. Mademoiselle de Lannilis knew all that and did not deceive herself, but she

said to herself, "I love him so much that he must at last love me."

From this came all her troubles. Her life would have been tolerable if she had not loved her husband so much, but she loved him too much. She succeeded only in wearying him with her importunities and her tenderness. He resumed and continued his former life, which was very dissolute. Fifteen years passed thus in a long martyrdom, which Madame de Lavardens bore with every appearance of passive resignation—a resignation which was not, however, in her heart. Nothing could distract her, nor cure her of the love which tortured her.

M. de Lavardens died in 1869; he left a son fourteen years old, who already began to show all the characteristics and faults of his father. Without being seriously endangered, Madame de Lavardens' fortune was found to be somewhat undermined and somewhat reduced. Madame de Lavardens sold her house in Paris, retired to the country, lived with very great system and economy, devoting herself entirely to the education of her son.

But even there vexation and sorrow awaited her. Paul de Lavardens was intelligent, amiable and good, but rebelled absolutely against all restraint and all labor. He drove to despair three or four tutors who tried to put something serious into his head.

He presented himself at St. Cyr, was not admitted, and then began to squander in Paris two or three hundred thousand francs as fast and as foolishly as possible.

That done, he enlisted in the first regiment of the light infantry, just ordered to Africa, had an opportunity to make his *début* as one of a little expedition into Sahara, conducted himself with bravery, very soon was made quartermaster, and at the end of three years was appointed sublieutenant, when he fell in love with a young woman who played "La Fille de Madame Angot" in the theater at Algiers. Paul had served his time; he left the service, and came back to Paris with his young opera-singer; then it was a ballet-dancer, then an actress, then a circus-rider. He tried all kinds. He lived the brilliant and miserable life of an idler. But he spent only three or four months in Paris. His mother made him an allowance of thirty thousand francs, and declared that so long as she lived, he should not have a cent more until he married. He knew his mother, and knew that she always kept her word in serious matters. So wishing to make a good figure in Paris, and lead a merry life there, he spent his thirty thousand francs between the months of March and May; and then quietly turned himself out to grass, as it were, at Lavardens, hunting, fishing, and

riding with the officers of the artillery regiment stationed at Souvigny. The little milliners and grisettes of the province took the places of the little singers and little actresses of Paris, without causing them to be forgotten. By looking a little, one can find grisettes even in the provinces; and Paul did look a little.

As soon as the curé came up to Madame de Lavar-dens:

"I can," said she, "tell you the names of the purchasers of Longueval, without waiting for M. de Larnac. I am perfectly at ease about it, and do not doubt the success of our combination. So that we should not get into a foolish quarrel, we, that is my neighbor M. de Larnac, M. Gallard, a prominent banker in Paris, and I, have made an agreement. M. de Larnac will have La Mionne; M. Gallard, the chateau and Blanche-Couronne; and I, La Rozeraié. I know, Monsieur le Curé, that you are anxious about your poor people. Take courage. These Gallards are very rich, and they will give you plenty of money."

At this moment a carriage was seen approaching at a distance, in a cloud of dust.

"Here comes M. de Larnac," cried Paul. "I know his ponies."

All three came down the terrace in haste, and re

turned to the chateau. They reached it just as the carriage stopped in front of the steps.

"Well?" asked Madame de Lavardens.

"Well!" replied M. de Larnac, "we have nothing."

"What! nothing?" demanded Madame de Lavardens, very pale and very much agitated.

"Nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing; none of us."

And M. de Larnac, jumping out of the carriage, related what had happened at the sale at Souvigny.

"Everything," said he, "went off, at first, as if on wheels. The chateau was awarded to M. Gallard for six hundred thousand and fifty francs. No competitor. An overbid of fifty francs was enough. On the contrary, there was a little battle for Blanche-Couronne. The bids rose from five hundred thousand to five hundred and twenty thousand francs, which gave the victory to M. Gallard. A fresh battle, more bitterly disputed for La Rozeriaie; it was finally awarded to you, madame, for four hundred and fifty-five thousand francs; and I secured, without opposition, the forest of La Mionne with an overbid of a hundred francs. Everything seemed to be ended. People were beginning to stand up in the assemblage, and crowd around our lawyers to learn the names of the purchasers. How-

ever, M. Brazier, the judge who had charge of the sale, called for silence, and the bailiff offered for sale the four lots together at two millions one hundred and fifty or sixty thousand francs, I do not know exactly which. A murmur of incredulity ran round the audience. On all sides you heard: 'No one, go on—there will be no one.' But little Gibert, the lawyer, who was sitting in the front row, and who, until then, had given no signs of life, rose, and said calmly:

"I have a buyer for the four lots together at two millions two hundred thousands francs."

"This was a thunder-clap—a great clamor soon followed a dead silence. The hall was filled with the farmers and growers of the neighborhood. So much money for land—the idea threw them into a respectful stupor. However, M. Gallard nodded to Sandrier, the lawyer, who made his bids. The struggle began between Gibert and Sandrier. They reached two millions five hundred thousand francs. A short moment of hesitation on the part of M. Gallard. He decided. He continued up to three millions. There he stopped, and the estate was awarded to Gibert. Every one rushed for him, they surrounded him, they overwhelmed him. 'The name, the name of the buyer?' 'It is an American,' replied Gibert. 'Madame Scott.'"

"Madame Scott!" cried Paul de Lavardens.

"Do you know her?" demanded Madame de Lavardens.

"Do I know her? If only I did! Not at all. But I was at a ball at her house about six weeks ago."

"At a ball at her house! and you do not know her—what sort of a woman is she, then?"

"Charming, exquisite, a dream, a marvel!"

"And there is a M. Scott?"

"Certainly; a tall, fair man. He was at his ball. He was pointed out to me. He bowed right and left at random. He did not enjoy himself, I assure you. He looked at us, and seemed to be saying to himself: 'Who are all these people? What do they come to my house for?' We went to see Madame Scott and Miss Percival, Madame Scott's sister, and it was worth the trouble."

"These Scotts," said Madame de Lavardens, addressing M. de Larnac, "do you know anything about them?"

"Yes, madame. I know of them. M. Scott is an American, immensely rich, who established himself in Paris last year. As soon as I heard the name, I knew the victory had never been in doubt. Gallard was beaten in advance. The Scotts began by buying a house in Paris that cost two millions, besides the Park Monceau."

“Yes; Rue Murillo,” said Paul. “I have just told you that I went to a ball at their house; it was——”

“Let M. de Larnac speak. You can tell us presently the history of your ball at Madame Scott’s.”

“Know then, that my Americans are established in Paris, and the shower of gold has commenced,” continued M. de Larnac. “True parvenus amuse themselves by foolishly throwing away money. This great fortune is quite new. It is said that ten years ago Madame Scott was begging in the streets of New York.”

“She has begged?”

“So it is said, madame. Then she was married to this Scott, the son of a New York banker—and suddenly a successful lawsuit put into their hands not millions, but tens of millions. They have, somewhere in America, a silver mine; an actual, a real mine, a silver mine, in which there is money. Oh! you will see what splendor will shine at Longueval. We will all look like poor people. It is claimed that they have a hundred thousand francs a day to spend.”

“Just think what neighbors!” cried Madame de Lavardens. “An adventuress! and still worse—a heretic, Monsieur l’Abbé, a Protestant!”

A heretic! a Protestant! Poor curé! that was his first thought when he heard the words: *an American Madame Scott*. The new chatelaine would not go to mass! What did it matter to him if she had begged? What did it matter to him, her tens of millions and her tens and tens of millions? She was not a Catholic! He would no longer baptize the children born at Longueval, and the chapel of the chateau, where he so often had said mass, would be transformed into a Protestant oratory, in which would be heard the icy eloquence of some Calvinist or Lutheran minister.

In this group of amazed, disconsolate people, Paul de Lavardens looked radiant.

"A charming heretic at any rate," said he, "and, indeed, if you please, two charming heretics. You ought to see the two sisters on horseback in the Bois, with two little grooms behind them, not higher than that."

"Come, Paul, tell us what you know—this ball that you spoke of—how did you happen to go to a ball at these Americans'?"

"By the merest chance! My aunt Valentine received, that evening. I arrived about ten o'clock, for as you probably know there is no foolish gayety at my aunt Valentine's Wednesdays. I had been there about twenty minutes, when I saw Roger de

Puymartin quietly slipping out. I followed him into the hall, and said to him, 'Let us go in again together.' 'Oh, I am not going back.' 'Where are you going?' 'To a ball.' 'At whose house?' 'At the Scotts', do you want to come with me?' 'But I am not invited.' 'Nor am I, either.' 'What! nor you either?' 'No, I am going with a friend.' 'And does your friend know the Scotts?' 'Slightly, enough to introduce both of us. Come along, you will see Madame Scott.' 'Oh, I have seen her, riding in the Bois.' 'She is not *décolletée* on horseback; you have not seen her shoulders, and they are shoulders that are worth seeing. There is nothing finer in Paris at this moment.' And, *ma foi!* I went to the ball; I saw Madame Scott's auburn hair, and I saw Madame Scott's white shoulders, and I hope to see them again when there is a ball at Longueval."

"Paul!" said Madame de Lavardens, pointing to the abbé.

"Oh! Monsieur l'Abbé, I beg your pardon. Have I said anything? No, it seems to me——"

The poor priest had not heard him. His thoughts were elsewhere. Already he saw the preacher from the chateau stop at the door of each house in the village street, and slip under it little evangelical tracts.

Continuing his story, Paul entered upon an enthusiastic description of the house, which was a marvel——

“Of bad taste, and of glaring magnificence,” interrupted Madame de Lavardens.

“Not at all, mamma, not at all; nothing glaring, nothing loud—well-chosen furniture—all the arrangements full of grace and originality—a conservatory flooded with electric lights, and the buffet placed in the conservatory under a vine-trellis loaded with grapes—in the month of April. One could gather all one wished. The favors for the german, it seems, cost forty thousand francs—jewels and the most costly bonbonnières, and they begged you to take them. I took nothing myself, but many people did not hesitate. That evening, Puymartin related to me Madame Scott’s history. But it was not exactly the same as M. de Larnac’s story. Roger told me that Madame Scott was carried off by a company of mountebanks when she was very small; and that her father found her riding in a traveling circus, jumping over the banners and flying through the paper hoops.”

“A circus rider?” cried Madame de Lavardens.

“I prefer a beggar!”

“And while Roger was relating this romance to me I saw the foreign circus-rider come through a

corridor, in a marvelous toilette of satin and lace ; and I admired those shoulders, those dazzling shoulders, on which gleamed a necklace of diamonds as big as the stopper of a decanter. You would have said that the Minister of Finance had secretly sold Madame Scott half of the crown diamonds, and that this explained how it was that he had fifteen millions surplus in his accounts last month. Add to this, if you please, that she had a very thoroughbred air—the little mountebank—and that she was entirely at ease in all this splendor.”

Paul was so enthusiastic that his mother tried to stop him. In the presence of M. de Larnac, who was very much vexed, he allowed his satisfaction at having this wonderful American for a neighbor to be too plainly seen.

The Abbé Constantin prepared to go back to Longueval, but Paul, seeing him about to start, said :

“Oh ! no, no, Monsieur l'Abbé, you must not walk all the way to Longueval a second time in the heat. Let me drive you back. I am sorry to see you so troubled. I will try to divert you. Oh ! in spite of your being such a saint, I make you laugh sometimes with my foolishness.”

Half an hour afterward both the curé and Paul were rolling along, side by side, toward the village. Paul talked, talked, talked ! His mother was no

longer there to quiet him, and keep him in check. His delight was brimming over.

“Now, you see, Monsieur l’Abbé, you are wrong in taking things so seriously. There, look at my little mare, how she trots! how she steps out! You do not know her. Do you know what I paid for her? Four hundred francs. I discovered her, a fortnight ago, in the shafts of a gardener’s cart. When she is in training once, she will make twelve miles an hour, and one has their hands full with her all the time. Look, look how she pulls! how she pulls! Go on! tot! tot! tot! You are not in a hurry are you, Monsieur l’Abbé? Will you drive through the woods? It will do you good to take the air. If you knew, Monsieur l’Abbé, how fond I am of you, and how much I respect you. I hope I have not said too many foolish things before you just now. I should be so sorry.”

“No, my child, I have not heard anything.”

“Then we will take the longest way round.”

After turning to the left into the forest Paul went back to his first sentence:

“I tell you, Monsieur l’Abbé, that you are wrong in taking things so seriously. Do you want me to tell you what I think? What has just happened is very fortunate.”

“Very fortunate?”

“Yes, very fortunate. I would rather have the Scotts at Longueval than the Gallards. Have you not just heard M. de Larnac criticise them for spending their money foolishly? It is never foolish to spend money. What is foolish is to keep it. Your poor people—for I am very sure that it is especially of your poor people that you are thinking—well, this has been a good day for your poor people. At least that is my opinion. Religion? Yes, religion. They will not go to mass. That will trouble you, it is quite natural, but they will send you money, plenty of money, and you will take it, and you will be perfectly right. You see you cannot say no. There will be a shower of gold all over the country. A stir! a commotion! coaches and four, powdered postilions, hunting, fireworks! And here, in this wood, in this very drive where we are, I shall perhaps before long find Paris again. I may see again the two equestriennes and the two little grooms that I told you about just now. If you knew how handsome they are on horseback—the two sisters. One morning, in Paris, I followed them the whole way around the Bois de Boulogne. I can see them yet. They wore high-crowned gray hats, little black veils and two long riding-habits, with just a single seam down the back, and a woman must be extremely well-made to wear such a riding-

habit as that ! Because you see, Monsieur l'Abbé, that with a habit cut like that there is no deception possible."

The curé for some time had paid no attention to Paul's discourse. They were driving through a long, strait avenue. At the farther end of it the curé saw a horseman coming at a gallop.

"Look," said he to Paul, "look ! you have better eyes than I ; is not that Jean, yonder ?"

"Why, yes, it is Jean ; I know his gray mare." Paul was fond of horses, and he always looked at the horse before he looked at the rider. It was, indeed, Jean ; and perceiving the curé and Paul at a distance, he waved his cap which bore two gold bands.

Jean was a lieutenant in a regiment of artillery in garrison at Souvigny.

In a few minutes he rode up to the little carriage, and addressing the curé :

"I have just been at your house, godfather, and Pauline told me that you had gone to Souvigny to the sale. Well, who has bought the chateau ?"

"An American, Madame Scott."

"And Blanche-Couronne ?"

"The same Madame Scott."

"And La Rozeraie ?"

"Still, Madame Scott."

"And the forest, always, Madame Scott ?"

"You are right," replied Paul, "and I know her—Madame Scott—and there will be entertainments at Longueval. I will introduce you. Only, Monsieur l'Abbé is troubled because she is an American, and a Protestant."

"Ah! that is true, my poor godfather. But we will talk about all that to-morrow. I am coming to dine with you. I have given Pauline notice. I have not time to stop now. I am on duty, and I must be at quarters at three o'clock. *Au revoir*, Paul! Till to-morrow, godfather."

The lieutenant resumed his gallop. Paul started up his little horse.

"What a good fellow Jean is," said Paul.

"Oh! yes."

"There is no one in the world better than Jean."

"No, no better."

The curé turned around to look after Jean, who was already disappearing in the depths of the forest.

"Oh! yes, there is you, Monsieur l'Abbé."

"No, not I, not I."

"Oh, well, will you let me tell you, Monsieur l'Abbé, that there is no one in the world better than you two, you and Jean!"

"Now that is the truth! Oh, wait, here is a good place to trot. I have been letting Niniche walk. I have named her Niniche."

Paul just touched Niniche with the tip of the whip, and as she started off at a rapid pace, he delighted cried :

“ Just look how she lifts her feet, Monsieur l’Abbé, “look now, how she lifts her feet ! and so regular ! Just like a perfect machine ! Lean over and see ! ”

The Abbé Constantin to please Paul leaned over a little to see *how Niniche lifted her feet*. But he was thinking of something else.

II.

THIS lieutenant's name was Jean Reynaud. He was the son of a country doctor, who was sleeping in the cemetery at Longueval. When the Abbé Constantin, in 1846, came to take possession of his parish, a Doctor Reynaud, the grandfather of Jean, was established in a cheerful little home on the Souvigny road, between the two chateaux of Longueval and Lavardens.

Marcel, the son of this Doctor Reynaud, had finished his medical studies at Paris. He was very industrious, and possessed of superior mental ability. He had received the first prize at the competition for fellowships. He decided to remain in Paris and try his fortune, and everything promised a prosperous and brilliant career for him, when, in 1852, he received the news of his father's death, from apoplexy. Marcel hastened to Longueval in the deepest grief. He worshiped his father. He spent a month with his mother, and, at the end of that time, spoke of the necessity of returning to Paris.

“It is true,” said she to him, “you must go.”

“What! I go? We must go; do you think that I will leave you here all alone? I take you with me.”

“Go to live in Paris! Leave this place where I was born, where your father lived, where he died! I can never do it, my child, never! Go alone, since your life and all your future are there. I understand you. I know you will not forget me, that you will come often, very often to see me.”

“No, mother,” he replied, “I shall stay here.”

He stayed. His hopes, his ambitions, everything vanished, disappeared in a moment.

He saw but one thing—duty, which was, not to abandon his aged, suffering mother. In this duty, simply accepted, and simply performed, he found happiness. And, after all, there is little beside duty in which happiness is found.

Marcel adapted himself to his new life with a good grace, and with all his heart. He went on with his father's life, taking the furrow where his father had left it. He gave himself up entirely to the obscure profession of a country doctor, without regret and without looking back. He lived in the simplest manner possible, and one half of his time he gave to the poor, from whom he would never take a penny. This was his only luxury.

A charming young girl, without fortune, and alone in the world, crossed his path. He married her. This happened in 1855, and the following year brought Doctor Reynaud a great grief and a great joy; the death of his aged mother, and the birth of his son Jean.

At an interval of six weeks, the Abbé Constantin recited the prayers for the dead over the tomb of the grandmother, and was present, as godfather, at the baptism of the grandson.

Meeting at the bedside of the suffering and dying, the priest and the physician, alike in heart and feeling, had been attracted and attached to each other. They felt themselves to be of the same family, the same race—the race of the tender, the just, the kind.

Years succeeded years, calm, tranquil, sweet, in the full satisfaction of labor and duty. Jean was growing up. He took his first lessons in writing of his father, and his first lessons in Latin of the curé.

Jean was industrious and intelligent; he made such progress that the two masters, especially the curé, found themselves somewhat perplexed after a few years. Their pupil became too advanced for them. It was at this time, just after the death of her husband, that the countess came to permanently reside at Lavardens. She brought a tutor for her

son Paul, who was a very attractive but a very idle little fellow. The two children were of the same age, they had known each other from childhood. Madame de Lavardens was very fond of Doctor Reynaud, and one day she made him this proposition:

"Send Jean to me every morning," said she, "and I will send him back to you every evening. Paul's tutor is a very intellectual young man, and he will make our two children study. You will do me a favor. Jean will set a good example to Paul."

So it was arranged, and the little village-boy did, indeed, set the little gentleman excellent examples of industry and application; but these excellent examples were not followed.

War broke out. On the 4th of November, at seven o'clock in the morning, the troops, drafted at Souvigny, assembled on the village square; their chaplain was the Abbé Constantin, their surgeon, Doctor Reynaud. The same thought came into the minds of both at the same time; the priest was sixty-two years old, the physician fifty.

On setting out, the regiment took the road which goes through Longueval and passed in front of the doctor's house. Madame Reynaud and Jean were waiting on the roadside. The child threw himself into his father's arms.

“Take me, papa, take me!”

Madame Reynaud wept. The doctor folded them both in a long embrace, and then went on his way.

A hundred feet farther on the road takes an abrupt turn. The doctor turned around and cast a lingering look at his wife and child—the last. He was never to see them again.

On the 8th of January, 1871, the regiment from Souvigny attacked the village of Villersexel, occupied by the Prussians, who had fortified the walls, and were barricaded in the houses. The cannonading commenced. A soldier in the front ranks received a ball in his chest and fell. There was a moment of hesitation and confusion.

“Forward! forward!” cried the officers.

The men passed over the body of their comrade, and, under a hailstorm of balls, entered the town.

Doctor Reynaud and the Abbé Constantin marched with the troops. They halted when they reached the wounded man. Blood poured in floods from his mouth.

“I can do nothing,” said the doctor; “he is dying; he is for you.”

The priest knelt down beside the dying man, and the doctor, rising, went on toward the village. He had not taken ten steps when he stopped, threw up both his arms and fell to the ground. The priest

ran to him. He was dead—killed by a ball through the temple.

That night the village was taken, and the next day the body of Doctor Reynaud was deposited in the cemetery at Villersexel. Two months afterward the Abbé Constantin brought his friend's coffin to Longueval, and following the coffin as it was borne out of the church walked an orphan. Jean had lost his mother, too. When the news of her husband's death came she remained for twenty-four hours prostrated, crushed—without a word, without a tear. Then fever set in, then delirium, and then, at the end of a fortnight, death.

Jean was alone in the world. He was fourteen years old.

There remained of this family, in which for a century every one had been good and honest, only a child kneeling by a grave, who promised to be what his grandfather and his father had been—honest and good. There are such families in France, and many, many more than one ventures to say. Our poor country is cruelly misrepresented in many things by certain writers who draw startling, exaggerated pictures of it. It is true that the history of good people is often either monotonous or sorrowful. This story is a proof of it.

Jean's grief was the grief of a man. For a long

time he was sad, for a long time silent. The evening after his father's burial the Abbé Constantin took him home with him to the parsonage. The day had been rainy and cold. Jean was sitting by the fire, the priest was reading his breviary. Old Pauline went in and out. An hour passed in silence, when Jean, suddenly looking up, said:

"Godfather, has my father left me any money?"

This was such a strange question that the abbé, amazed, thought he could not have heard aright.

"You ask me if your father——"

"I ask you, godfather, if my father left me any money?"

"Yes, he must have left you money."

"A good deal, did he not? I have often heard people say that my father was rich. Tell me, as nearly as you can, how much he must have left me."

"But I do not know. You ask me about things——"

The poor priest was distressed. Such a question at such a moment! He believed that he knew Jean's heart, and in that heart there should be no place for such thoughts.

"I beg of you, godfather, tell me," continued Jean gently. "I will explain to you, afterward, why I ask you this."

"Ah! Well! Your father was said to have two or three hundred thousand francs."

"And is that much money?"

"Yes, that is a large sum of money."

"And all that money is mine?"

"Yes, all that money is yours."

"Ah! So much the better; because on the day when my father was killed, over there, the Prussians on the very same day killed the son of a poor woman at Longueval—Mother Clement—you know her. They also killed Rosalie's brother, with whom I used to play when I was little. Well, since I am rich, and they are poor, I want to divide the money my father has left me with Mother Clement and Rosalie."

On hearing these words the curé rose, took Jean's two hands, and drawing him close folded him in his arms. The white head rested upon the blond head. Two big tears broke from the old priest's eyes, rolled slowly down his cheeks, and crept away into the wrinkles of his face.

The curé, however, was obliged to explain to Jean that, although he was the heir to his father's property, still he could not dispose of it as he pleased. There must be a family council—a guardian.

"You, doubtless, godfather?"

"No, not I, my child; a priest has no right to

hold a guardianship. I think Monsieur Lenient, the notary at Souvigny, who was one of your father's best friends, will be chosen. You can talk with him—you can tell him what you wish to do."

Monsieur Lenient was, indeed, selected by the family council to assume the duties of a guardian. Jean's entreaties were so urgent, and so touching, that the notary consented to deduct from the income the sum of twenty-four hundred francs, to be divided between Mother Clement and little Rosalie, every year until Jean was of age.

At this juncture Madame Lavardens acted very generously. She went to see the Abbé Constantin.

"Give Jean to me," said she, "give him entirely to me, until he has completed his studies. I will bring him back to you every year for his vacation. It is not a favor that I am doing you. It is a favor that I ask of you. I can desire nothing more fortunate for my son. Paul desires to enter St. Cyr, to become a soldier. I can find the necessary masters and appliances only in Paris. I will take the two children there; they will be brought up together, under my eyes, like brothers. I will make no difference between them, I assure you."

It was difficult not to accept such a proposition. The old curé would have been glad to keep Jean with him, and the thought of the separation almost

broke his heart ; but what was for the child's interest ? that was the only thing to be considered. The rest was nothing. Jean was called.

“ My child,” said Madame de Lavardens, “ will you come and live with me and Paul, for a few years ? I will take you to Paris.”

“ You are very kind, madame, but I would so much rather stay here.”

He looked at the curé, who turned away.

“ Why go away,” he continued, “ why take us away, Paul and me ?”

“ Because you can finish your studies, steadily and profitably, only in Paris. Paul will prepare for his examination at St. Cyr. You know that he wants to be a soldier.”

“ And I, too, madame ; I want to be a soldier.”

“ You a soldier ?” said the curé, “ but your father never thought of such a thing. Your father very often spoke of your future, your career, to me. You were to be a doctor, and like him a country doctor, at Longueval ; and like him help the poor, and like him take care of the sick. Jean, my child, remember——”

“ I remember ; I do remember.”

“ Well, then, you must do as your father wished. It is your duty, Jean, it is your duty. You must go to Paris. You would like to stay here. Ah ! I can

understand that ; and I, too, would like it very much, but it cannot be. You must go to Paris, to work, to work diligently. That does not trouble me. You are your father's own son. You will be an honest man, and an industrious man. One is rarely the one without being the other. And some day the poor will find in your father's house, in the very place where he did so much good, another Doctor Reynaud who, too, will help them. And I, if I am still in this world, will be so happy when that day comes—so happy. But I ought not to speak of myself. It is wrong—I am of no importance. You must think of your father. I tell you again, Jean, it was his dearest wish. You cannot have forgotten it.”

“No, I have not forgotten it ; but if my father sees me and hears me, I am sure he understands me, and forgives me, for it is on his account.”

“On his account.”

“Yes ; when I heard that he was dead, and when I knew how he died, in a moment, without being obliged to reflect, I said to myself that I would be a soldier ; and I will be a soldier. Godfather, and you, madame ; I entreat you not to prevent me.”

The child burst into tears in an agony of despair. The countess and the abbé quieted him with kind words.

“Yes—yes—it is understood. Everything shall be as you wish—everything that you wish.”

They both had the same idea: “Let us leave it to time. Jean is only a child; he will change his mind.” In which they both were mistaken. Jean did not change his mind.

In the month of September, 1876, Paul was rejected at St. Cyr, and Jean stood eleventh at the School of Polytechnics. On the day when the list of successful candidates was published he wrote to the Abbé Constantin:

“I have passed, and passed too well; for I want to go into the army, and not into the civil service. However, if I keep my rank at the school it will be good for one of my comrades. He will get my place.”

But Jean did better than keep his rank. The final classification made him number seven. But instead of entering the School of Engineers he entered the School of Practice at Fontainebleau in 1878. He was just twenty-one. He was of age, master of his own fortune, and the first act of his administration was a large, a very large, expenditure. He bought for Mother Clement and for little Rosalie, now grown up, two annuities of fifteen hundred francs each. They cost him seventy thousand francs, nearly the same amount which Paul spent in the

first year of his majority on Mademoiselle Lise Bruyère, of the Palais-Royal Theater.

Two years later Jean carried off the first prize at Fontainebleau, which gave him his choice of vacant places. There was one in the regiment stationed at Souvigny, and Souvigny was very near Longueval. Jean asked for the place and obtained it.

This is the way that Jean Reynaud, lieutenant in the Ninth Regiment of Artillery, came, in the month of October, 1880, into possession of Dr. Marcel Reynaud's house. This is the way he found himself again in the country where his childhood was spent, and where every one had preserved the memory of his father's life and death. This is the way that the Abbé Constantin was not denied the happiness of seeing his friend's son again, and if the truth must be told, he no longer regretted that Jean had not been a physician. When the old curé went out of church, after saying mass, if he saw a cloud of dust blow along the road, if he felt the earth tremble with the roaring of cannon, he stopped and took as much pleasure as a child in seeing the regiment pass.

But the regiment, for him, was Jean! In the features of this sturdy, robust officer, he could plainly read integrity, courage and goodness.

As soon as Jean saw the curé at a distance, he

would put his horse on a gallop, and stop to talk a little with his godfather. Jean's horse always turned his head around to the curé, for he well knew that there was always a lump of sugar for him in the pocket of the old soutane—worn and pieced—his morning soutane. The abbé had a handsome one which he saved to go into company—when he went into company.

When the trumpets of the regiment sounded through the village, every eye was watching for Jean, little Jean. For to the old people of Longueval he was still little Jean. One old peasant, wrinkled and decrepit, could never break himself of the habit of saluting him as he passed, with a "Good-morning, boy!" The boy was six feet tall.

And Jean went never through the village without seeing at two windows the old parchment face of Mother Clement, and Rosalie's smiling features.

The latter had been married the year before. Jean was her witness, and danced merrily the evening of the wedding with the young girls of Longueval.

This was the lieutenant who, on Saturday the 28th of May, 1881, at about five o'clock in the afternoon, dismounted in front of the parsonage gate. He entered; his horse quietly followed him, and

made his own way toward a little shed in the yard. Pauline stood at the kitchen window. Jean went up and kissed her on both cheeks.

“Good-day, my good Pauline. How do you do !”

“Very well. I am busy with your dinner. Do you want to know what you are going to have ? Potato soup, a leg of mutton, and a dish of eggs, *au lait*.”

“Excellent ! I like it all ; and I am starving.”

“And I forgot to mention a salad, which you can help me pick presently. Dinner will be ready at half-past six exactly ; because to-night, at half-past seven, Monsieur le Curé has his service for the month of Mary.”

“Where is my godfather ?”

“In the garden ; Monsieur le Curé is very sad on account of the sale yesterday.”

“Yes ; I know, I know.”

“It will cheer him up a little to see you. He is always so happy when you are here. Take care, Loulou wants to nibble the rose-bushes. How warm he is, poor Loulou !”

“I came by the longest way, through the wood, and I rode pretty fast.”

Jean caught Loulou, who was going toward the rose trellis, took off his saddle and bridle, fastened

him in the little shed, and rubbed him down with a bit of straw in a twinkling.

Then he went into the house, took off his sword and his cap, put on an old five-cent straw hat, and started for the garden to find the curé.

The poor abbé was indeed very sad. He had not closed his eyes all night; he who usually slept so peacefully, so sweetly, the untroubled sleep of a child. His heart was heavy. Longueval in the hands of a foreigner, of a heretic, of an adventurer!

Jean repeated what Paul had said the day before:

“You will have money, plenty of money for your poor.”

“Money! money! Yes, my poor will lose nothing—perhaps they will gain. But I must go to ask for this money, and I shall find in the sal^{on}, instead of my dear old friend, this American with red hair—it seems that she has red hair. I shall certainly go for my poor people, I shall go; and she will give me money, but she will give me nothing else. The marchioness gave in a different way. Her heart and soul were in the giving. We went together, every week, to visit the poor and the sick. She knew all their sufferings, and all their miseries. And when I was confined to my armchair with the gout she made the rounds all alone; and as well, or better than I.”

Here Pauline interrupted the conversation. She carried an immense china salad bowl, decorated in big staring red flowers.

"Here I am," said she. "I am going to pick the salad. Jean, do you want lettuce or young chiccory?"

"Chiccory," replied Jean gayly; "it is a long time since I have eaten young chiccory."

"Well! you shall have some to-night. Here, take the salad bowl."

Pauline began to cut the chiccory, and Jean stooped down to receive the leaves into the big salad bowl. The curé looked on.

At this moment a tinkling as of little bells was heard. A carriage was approaching and the old ironwork rattled. The abbé's little garden was separated from the road only by a low hedge, breast-high, with a little open gate in the middle of it.

All three looked up and saw an old-fashioned livery carriage coming, drawn by two big white horses, and driven by an old coachman in a blouse. By the side of the coachman sat a servant in the severest and most perfect of liveries.

Inside the carriage were two young women, both in traveling dress, very elegant, but very simple.

When the carriage reached the garden hedge the driver stopped his horses, and addressing the abbé,

"Monsieur le Curé," said he, "here are some ladies who want to see you."

Then turning to his passengers, he added :

"This is Monsieur le Curé, of Longueval."

The Abbé Constantin had approached and opened the little gate. The travelers alighted. Their attention was immediately drawn, not without some surprise, to the young officer, who to his great embarrassment stood with his straw hat in one hand and in the other a big salad bowl heaped up with chiccory.

The two ladies entered the garden, and the elder—she seemed to be about twenty-five—said with a slightly foreign accent, quite unusual and peculiar :

"I must introduce myself, Monsieur le Curé, Madame Scott. I am the Madame Scott who bought the chateau yesterday, and the farms and all the rest. I hope I do not disturb you, and that you can spare me a few minutes."

Then pointing to her traveling companion :

"Miss Bettina Percival—my sister—you have surmised it already, I think. We are so alike, are we not? Ah! Bettina, we have left our little bags in the carriage, and we want them."

"I will go and get them." And as Miss Percival started for the two bags, Jean said :

"Allow me, mademoiselle, I beg of you."

"I am very sorry, monsieur, to give you so much trouble. The servant will hand them to you—they are under the front seat."

She had the same accent as her sister, the same large black eyes, laughing and bright, and the same hair—not red—but blond with golden lights, where the sunlight played softly through it. She bowed to Jean, with a pretty smile, and he, giving the bowl of chiccory to Pauline, went to get the little bags.

Meanwhile, the Abbé Constantin, very much agitated and embarrassed, was conducting the new chatelaine of Longueval into the parsonage.

III.

THE parsonage of Longueval was not a palace. The same room on the ground floor served for a sal^on, and for a dining-room, communicating directly with the kitchen by a door that was always wide open ; this room was provided with the scantiest amount of furniture : two old armchairs, six straw chairs, a sideboard, and a round table. Pauline had already laid the cloth for two, the abbé and Jean.

Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival went in and out, examining the curé's residence with a sort of childish curiosity.

"The garden, the house, everything is charming," said Mrs. Scott.

Together they boldly entered the kitchen. The Abbé Constantin followed them, astonished, stupefied, horrified at this abrupt and unexpected American invasion.

Old Pauline looked at the two foreigners with a disturbed and sullen air.

"Look at them," she said to herself, "these heretics, these hateful people."

And with trembling hands she went on mechanically picking over her salad.

"I congratulate you," said Bettina to her, "your little kitchen is so well kept! Look, Suzie, is it not just your idea of a parsonage?"

"And the curé, too," said Mrs. Scott. "Ah! yes, Monsieur le Curé, won't you let me tell you so? If you knew how glad I am that you are just what you are! What did I tell you on the train, this morning, Bettina? and just now again in the carriage?"

"My sister said, Monsieur le Curé, that what she desired most of all was a curé, not young, not gloomy, not severe—a curé with white hair, and a kind and pleasant disposition."

"And you are just exactly that, Monsieur le Curé—exactly. No, we could not be better pleased. Excuse me, I beg of you, for speaking so to you. Parisians know how to turn their phrases in a skillful, delicate manner. As for me, I do not know how, and I would have great difficulty in keeping out of trouble, in speaking French, if I did not say things simply, foolishly, just as they come. In short, I am pleased, very much pleased; and I hope you are too, Monsieur le Curé, that you are pleased, very much pleased with your new parishioners."

"My parishioners!" said the curé, finding speech,

motion, life, everything, which for a few minutes had completely deserted him. "My parishioners! Pardon me, madame, mademoiselle—I am so overcome! You could be—you are Catholics?"

"Why, yes, we are Catholics."

"Catholics! Catholics!" repeated the curé.

"Catholics! Catholics!" cried old Pauline, who appeared, beaming, radiant, her hands uplifted, in the doorway of the kitchen.

Mrs. Scott looked at the curé and looked at Pauline, very much astonished to have produced such an effect with a single word, and to complete the picture Jean appeared, carrying the two little traveling-bags. The curé and Pauline greeted him in the same words:

"Catholics! Catholics!"

"Ah, I understand," said Mrs. Scott, laughing; "it is our name, our country! You thought we were Protestants. Not at all; our mother was a Canadian of French and Catholic origin. That is the way that my sister and I come to speak French, with an accent, it is true, and with a certain American manner, but at least so that we can say almost everything that we want to say. My husband is a Protestant, but he leaves me perfect liberty, and my two children are Catholics. This is why, Monsieur l'Abbé, we have wanted from the first day to come to see you."

"For that," continued Bettina, "and for something else, but for this something else we must have our little bags."

"Here they are, mademoiselle," said Jean.

"This one is mine."

"And this is mine."

While the little bags were passing from the officer's hands to the hands of Mrs. Scott and Bettina the curé presented Jean to the two Americans, but he was still in such a state of emotion that the presentation was not entirely according to rule. The curé forgot only one thing, but a very essential thing in an introduction, Jean's surname.

"This is Jean, my godson," said he, "lieutenant in the artillery regiment, stationed at Souvigny. He is one of the family."

Jean made two immense bows, the Americans two little ones, after which they began to look into their bags, and each took out a roll of a thousand francs, daintily inclosed in green leather boxes hooped with gold.

"I have brought you this for your poor people, Monsieur le Curé," said Mrs. Scott.

"And I, this," said Bettina. They slipped their offerings delicately into the right hand and into the left hand of the old curé, and he, looking first at

his right hand and then at his left, said to himself :

“What are these two little things? They are very heavy. There must be gold in them. Yes; but how much? how much?”

The Abbé Constantin was sixty-two years old, and a good deal of money had passed through his hands—not to stay long, it is true; but that money had come to him in little sums, and the idea of such a present had never entered his head. Two thousand francs! He had never had two thousand francs in his possession, never even a thousand.

Then, not knowing what they had given him, the curé did not know how to thank them.

“I am very grateful to you, madame; you are very good, mademoiselle,” he faltered.

After all, he did not thank them enough. Jean thought it was time to interfere.

“Godfather, these ladies have just given you two thousand francs.”

Then, overcome with emotion and gratitude, the curé cried :

“Two thousand francs! Two thousand francs for my poor!”

Pauline suddenly made a fresh appearance.

“Two thousand francs! Two thousand francs!”

“So it appears,” said the curé, “so it appears.

Here, Pauline, lock up this money, and take care of it."

Old Pauline was servant, cook, apothecary, treasurer—in short, all sorts of things at the parsonage.

With trembling hands she respectfully received the two little rolls of gold pieces, which represented so much suffering relieved, so many sorrows softened.

"That is not all," said Mrs. Scott. "I will give you five hundred francs every month."

"And I will give the same as my sister."

"A thousand francs a month! But there will no longer be any poor."

"That is just what we want. I am rich, very rich—and my sister, too! She is even richer than I; because a young girl does not have so many expenses, while I— Ah! I!— I spend all I can, all that I can. When one has a good deal of money, too much money—if one has really more than is right—say, Monsieur le Curé, is there any other way to get pardon for such a sin, than to have open hands and give, give, give as much as possible, and as well as possible? Besides, you are going to give me something."

And, addressing Pauline, "Will you be so good as to give me a glass of water? No, nothing else—just a glass of water. I am dying of thirst."

"And I," said Bettina, laughing, while Pauline ran to bring a glass of water, "I am dying of something else. I am dying with hunger. Monsieur le Curé, I know it is awfully impolite, but I see that your table is laid. Couldn't you ask us to dinner?"

"Bettina!" said Mrs. Scott.

"Be still, Suzie, be still. You want us, do you not, Monsieur le Curé?"

The old curé could not reply. He no longer knew anything—even where he was. They took his parsonage by assault. They were Catholics! They had brought him two thousand francs! They promised him a thousand francs a month! And they wanted to dine with him! That was the climax. He was dismayed at the idea of doing the honors—of his leg of mutton and his dish of eggs, *au lait*—to these two rich Americans, who were accustomed to be served with the daintiest, rarest, most extraordinary dishes. He murmured:

"To dine! to dine! You would dine here?"

Jean was obliged to interfere a second time:

"My godfather will be only too happy," said he, "if you will consent; I see what troubles him. We expected to dine alone, the two of us; and so you must not expect a banquet, ladies. You will make allowances."

"Yes, yes; all allowances," said Bettina

Then, addressing her sister :

"Now, Suzie, do not frown at me because I have been a little . . . you know that I am always a little . . . Let us stay, will you? It will rest us so much to spend an hour here quietly. We have had such a tiresome day on the railway, in the carriage, in the dust, in the heat! We had such a frightful breakfast this morning in such a frightful hotel. We would have to go back to that same hotel to dine at half-past seven, so that we could take the train back to Paris. It will be much nicer to dine here. You won't say no? Ah! dear Suzie, you are so good."

She kissed her sister, so coaxingly, so tenderly, then turning to the curé :

"If you only knew, *Monsieur le Curé*, how good she is."

"Bettina! Bettina!"

"Come," said Jean, "hurry, Pauline! Two more plates. I will help you."

"And I, too," cried Bettina, "I, too. I am going to help you. Let me, I beg of you, it will please me so much. Only, *Monsieur le Curé*, you must let me make myself at home a little."

So she took off, first her traveling cloak; and Jean could not help admiring her lithe and graceful figure, wonderful in its exquisite perfection.

Miss Percival then took off her hat, but with a little too much haste, for it was a signal for a charming inundation. A whole avalanche escaped, and poured in torrents, in long cascades, over Bettina's shoulders ; she was standing in front of a window through which the sunlight entered in floods ; and this golden light, shining full on her beautiful golden hair, made an exquisite frame for the young girl's radiant beauty.

Confused and blushing, Bettina called her sister to her aid ; and Mrs. Scott had no little trouble in bringing order out of this delightful disorder.

When the accident was at length repaired, nothing could prevent Bettina seizing the plates, and the knives and forks.

"Why, monsieur," said she to Jean, "I know perfectly well how to set the table. Ask my sister. Say, Suzie, when I was a little girl in New York, didn't I know how to set the table?"

"Yes ; very well," replied Mrs. Scott.

And she, too, while she begged the curé to excuse Bettina's thoughtlessness, took off her hat and cloak ; and Jean, for the second time, had the delightful vision of a charming figure and wonderful hair. But the accident did not occur a second time, much to Jean's regret.

A few minutes later Mrs. Scott, Miss Percival, the

curé and Jean sat down to the little parsonage table; and then, through their unexpected and extraordinary meeting—above all, through Bettina's good humor and sprightliness—the conversation very soon became entirely unconstrained and informal.

"You will see, Monsieur le Curé, you will see if I have told you a story—if I am not starving. I warn you that I am ravenous. I was never more pleased to sit down at a table. This dinner makes a pleasant finish to a happy day. We are delighted, my sister and I, to own the chateau, these farms and this forest."

"And to have it in such an extraordinary fashion. It was so unlooked for—so little expected!" said Mrs. Scott.

"You might well say we did not expect it at all, Suzie. Do you know, Monsieur l'Abbé, that yesterday was my sister's birthday . . . But, pardon, monsieur . . . Monsieur Jean, is it not?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, Monsieur Jean."

"Then, Monsieur Jean, will you give me a little more of that excellent soup, if you please?"

The Abbé Constantin began to feel better, and recover himself; but he was still too much affected to discharge his duties as host quite correctly; and it was Jean who managed his godfather's modest dinner. So he filled the plate of the charming

American, who looked at him with a pair of large, dark eyes, in which shone artlessness, fearlessness and vivacity. Jean's eyes paid her back in the same coin.

Not three-quarters of an hour before, the young American and the young officer spoke to each other, in the curé's garden, for the first time; and already they were completely at ease with each other—on confidential, almost intimate terms.

"I told you already, Monsieur le Curé, that yesterday was my sister's birthday. A week ago my brother-in-law was obliged to go to America. Just as he was starting he said to my sister: 'I shall not be here on your birthday, but you will hear from me.' So, yesterday there came presents and bouquets from all directions; but up to five o'clock nothing from my brother-in-law—nothing. We went out to the Bois on horseback and—*à propos* of horses——"

She stopped short, and looked down inquiringly at Jean's dusty boots, then she cried:

"Why, monsieur, you wear spurs?"

"Yes, mademoiselle."

"You are in the cavalry?"

"I am in the artillery, mademoiselle, and the artillery is cavalry."

"And your regiment is stationed here?"

"Very near here."

"Why, then you will ride with us?"

"With the greatest pleasure, mademoiselle."

"That is all. Let me see, where was I?"

"You do not know, Bettina, where you are; and you are telling these gentlemen all sorts of things which cannot interest them."

"Oh! I beg your pardon, madame," said the curé.

"The sale of the chateau is the great question of this province, just now—and mademoiselle's story interests us very much."

"There, Suzie, you see my story interests Monsieur le Curé very much. Now I will go on. We went out for a ride, we came back at seven o'clock—nothing. We went to dinner, and just as we rose from the table, a dispatch from America arrived—only two lines: 'I have, to-day, bought for you, in your own name, the chateau and domain of Longueval, near Souvigny, on the Northern Road.' Then we began to laugh, like two children, at the idea."

"No, no, Bettina, that is not quite true. You do us both injustice. Our first emotion was one of gratitude. We are fond of the country, my sister and I. My husband, who is very indulgent, knew that we were anxious to have a country seat in France. He has been looking for six months, but could find nothing. At last, without telling us, he

discovered this chateau, which was to be sold on my birthday. It was a generous and delicate attention."

"Yes, Suzie, you are right; but after the first outburst of gratitude there was a great outburst of laughter."

"That I acknowledge. When we reflected that we suddenly found ourselves—for what belongs to one belongs to the other—proprietors of a chateau, without knowing where it was, or what it was like, or how much it cost—why, it seemed like a fairy story. For five good minutes we laughed heartily. Then we took a map of France, and succeeded, not without some difficulty, in unearthing Souvigny. After the map it was the railroad guide's turn, and this morning at ten o'clock we took the express train for Souvigny.

"We have spent the whole day in visiting the chateau, the stables, the farms. We have not seen everything, for it was so immense, but we are delighted with everything that we have seen. Only, Monsieur le Curé, there is one thing which perplexed me. I know that the estate was publicly sold yesterday—I saw the large placards all along the road. But I did not dare ask any one of the farmers or keepers who accompanied us on our rounds—my ignorance would have looked so fool-

ish!—how much it all cost. My husband forgot to tell me in his dispatch. It is only a little thing in the delights of ownership, but I would not be sorry to know. Tell me, Monsieur le Curé, tell me, if you know—the price of it.”

“An enormous price,” replied the curé.

“An enormous price! You frighten me. How much exactly?”

“Three millions!”

“Only three millions?” cried Mrs. Scott; “the farms, the forests and all for three millions?”

“Yes, three millions.”

“Why, that is nothing,” said Bettina. “That charming little river going through the park is alone worth three millions.”

“And you said just now, Monsieur le Curé, you said there were many persons who bid against us for the lands and the chateau?”

“Yes, madame.”

“And was my name mentioned before these people after the sale?”

“Yes, madame.”

“And when my name was mentioned was there any one who knew me who spoke of me? Yes—yes! Your silence answers me—they did speak of me. Ah, well, I am serious now, Monsieur le Curé, very serious. I beg of you, as a favor, tell me what they said about me.”

“Why, madame,” replied the poor curé, who was on hot coals, “they spoke of your large fortune.”

“Yes, they must have spoken of that; no doubt they said I was very rich, and very recently a *parvenu*, did they not? Very well; but that was not all, they must have said something else.”

“No, I did not hear anything.”

“Oh! Monsieur le Curé, you are telling what you call a pious story. I distress you, for you are truth itself. But if I thus torment you, it is because I have a great interest in knowing what was said.”

“*Mon dieu!* madame,” interrupted Jean, “you are right, they did say something else, only my godfather is a little embarrassed in telling you; but, since you insist, they said that you were one of the most elegant, most brilliant, most——”

“One of the prettiest women in Paris? They might say that, as a little compliment one could say it; but that was not all. There was something else.”

“Ah! for instance——”

“Yes; there was something else, and I would like to have a frank, plain explanation with you now. I do not know—but I think this is one of my lucky days; it may be too soon to say it, perhaps, but it seems to me that both of you are, in some degree,

my friends. Well, then, tell me, if false, absurd stories are told about me; am I not right in thinking that you will help me to contradict them?"

"Yes, madame," replied Jean with eagerness, "you are right in thinking so."

"Then it is to you, monsieur, that I address myself. You are a soldier. It belongs to your profession to have courage. Promise me to be brave. Do you promise me?"

"What do you understand, madame, by being brave?"

"Promise—promise without explanations or conditions."

"Well, then, I promise."

"You will answer, then, frankly, yes or no, to the questions that I am going to ask you."

"I will answer."

"Did they tell you that I had begged in the streets of New York?"

"Yes, madame, they told me so."

"And that I had been a rider in a traveling circus?"

"They told me that, madame."

"I thought it! Well, you have heard the worst! But I would observe, in the first place, that there is nothing discreditable in all that. But if it is not true have I not the right to say that it is not true?"

And it is not true. I will tell you my history in a few words; and if I tell it to you—on the very first day—it is that you will have the goodness to repeat it to all those who speak of me to you. I am going to spend a part of my life in this country, and I desire to have it known where I come from, and what I am. Poor! that I have been—very poor. It was eight years ago. My father had just died—very soon after the death of our mother. I was eighteen years old, and Bettina nine. We were alone in the world, with heavy debts and a great lawsuit. My father's last words were: 'Suzie, never compromise the lawsuit, never, never. You will have millions, my children, millions!' He kissed us both. Then his mind wandered, and he died, repeating: 'Millions!' The next day an agent presented himself, who offered to pay all our debts and give me ten thousand dollars, if I would sell my interest in the lawsuit. It concerned the possession of a large tract of land in Colorado. I refused. Then it was, that for several months we were very poor."

"And it was then," said Bettina, "that I used to set the table."

"I spent all my time in the offices of New York lawyers; but none of them would take charge of my interests. Everywhere the same response:

‘Your case is very doubtful; your opponents are very rich and formidable, money is needed; money to carry on the suit, and you have none. You have had an offer of ten thousand dollars, besides having all your debts paid, accept it, sell your suit.’ But I could always hear my father’s last words, and I would not consent. Poverty might, however, have soon constrained me, when, one day, I solicited an interview with one of my father’s friends, Mr. William Scott, a banker in New York. He was not alone; a young man was sitting in his office near his desk. ‘You can talk freely,’ said he, ‘this is my son, Richard Scott.’ I looked at the young man, and he looked at me, and then we recognized each other. ‘Suzie!’ ‘Richard!’ He held out his hand to me. He was twenty-three and I was eighteen, as I have told you. We had played together very often when we were children. Then we were great friends. Seven or eight years before, he went to finish his education in France and in England. His father made me sit down, and asked me what brought me to him. I told him. He listened and replied, ‘You will need twenty or thirty thousand dollars. No one will lend you such a sum on the uncertain chances of a complicated lawsuit. It would be folly. If you are in need, if you want assistance—’ ‘That is not what Miss

Percival asks,' said Richard warmly. 'I know it; but what she asks of me is impossible.' He rose to wait upon me to the door. Then I broke down for the first time since my father's death. I had been strong until then, but I felt my courage exhausted. I could bear no more, and I burst into tears. At length I recovered myself and went away. An hour afterward Richard Scott came to see me. 'Suzie,' said he, 'promise to accept what I am going to offer you; promise me.' I promised him. 'Well,' said he, 'I will put the necessary sum at your disposal, on the single condition that my father shall know nothing of it.' 'But you must know about my claim, so that you will understand what it is, what it is worth.' 'I do not know the first word about your claim, and I do not wish to know. Where would be the merit of assisting you, if I were sure of getting my money back? Besides, you have promised to accept it. It is done. There is no going back.' It was offered to me with such simplicity, such openness of heart, that I accepted. Three months afterward we gained our cause. The property became indisputably ours, and we were offered five millions for it. I went to consult Richard. 'Refuse and wait,' said he; 'if they offer you such a sum, it is because the land is worth double.' 'But I must pay you back your

money. I owe you a great sum of money.' 'Oh! that will do later, there is no haste; I am doing well for the present, my credit is in no danger.' 'But I want to pay you immediately; I have such a horror of debt! Perhaps there will be a way without selling the property. Richard, will you be my husband?' Yes, Monsieur le Curé; yes, monsieur," said Mrs. Scott, laughing, "it was I who threw myself like that at my husband's head. It was I who asked for his hand. That you can tell to all the world, and you will only tell the truth. Besides, I was obliged to make this offer. Never, oh! I am as sure of it as I am of my life, he would never have spoken. I had become too rich. And, as he loved me, and not my money, my money frightened him a little. That is the history of my marriage. As to the history of our fortune, that can be told in a few words. There was, indeed, millions in these tracts of land in Colorado; they were found to contain very rich silver mines, and from these mines we receive every year a fabulous income.

"But we are all agreed, my husband, my sister and I, to give a large share of this income to the poor; you see, Monsieur le Curé, it is because we have known such bitter days. Bettina can remember when she was our little housekeeper in that

fifth story room, in New York. It is for that reason you will always find us ready to help those who, as we have been, are struggling amid the misfortunes and hardships of life. And now, Monsieur Jean, will you pardon this long discourse, and give me a little of that tempting cream?"

The cream was Pauline's composition of eggs and milk—and while Jean hastened to serve Madame Scott, she continued :

"I have not yet told you all. You must know how these extravagant stories were started. When we first came to Paris, a year ago, we felt it our duty to give a certain sum of money to the poor. Who told of it? Not we, certainly; but the fact was published in one of the newspapers, with the amount. Directly two young reporters came running to Mr. Scott to ask him a whole catalogue of questions about his past. They wanted to write about us in the papers—a . . . how do you say that?—a sketch of our lives. Mr. Scott is sometimes a little hasty. He was that day; and he dismissed these gentlemen very abruptly, without telling them anything. Then, not knowing our true history, they invented an imaginary one. The first one said that I had begged in the snow, in New York; and the second, the next day, to make his article still more sensational, made me jump through the

paper balloons in a circus at Philadelphia. You have some very droll journals in France, and we also—in America.”

Now, for the last five minutes Pauline had been making the most frantic signals to the curé, who so completely failed to understand them that at last the poor woman summoned all her courage :

“Monsieur le Curé, it is a quarter after seven.”

“A quarter after seven! Oh! ladies, I beg you to excuse me. I have a service this evening; it is the month of Mary.”

“The month of Mary—and is the service to be soon?”

“Yes, immediately.”

“And at exactly what time is our train to Paris?”

“At half-past nine,” replied Jean, “and you need only fifteen or twenty minutes to reach the station.”

“Then, Suzie, we could go to church.”

“We will go to church,” replied Madame Scott, “but before we part, Monsieur le Curé, I have a favor to ask of you. I want to have you dine with me, without fail, the first time that I dine at my new home at Longueval, and you, too, monsieur—all alone, just we four, like to-day. Oh! do not refuse; the invitation is heartily given.”

“And heartily accepted, madame,” replied Jean.

“I will write to let you know the day. I will

come as soon as possible. You call that *hanging the crane* do you not? Well! we will *hang the crane*, we four."

Pauline had carried Miss Percival off into a corner of the room, and was talking very earnestly. Their conversation ended with these words:

"You will be there?" said Bettina.

"Yes, I will be there."

"And you will tell me just the right moment?"

"I will tell you, but take care, here comes Monsieur le Curé, and he must not suspect anything."

The two sisters, the curé and Jean came out of the house. They went through the cemetery to the church. The evening was delightful. Slowly and silently all four walked through the little pathway, in the last rays of the setting sun. They approached the monument at Doctor Reynaud's grave, which, though simple, was by its proportions conspicuous among the other tombstones. Mrs. Scott and Bettina stopped, their attention drawn by this inscription which it bore:

"HERE LIES THE BODY OF

"DOCTOR MARCEL REYNAUD,"

"Surgeon-Major of the regiment drafted at Souvigny,
killed on the 8th of January, 1871, at the battle of
Villersexel."

"PRAY FOR HIM."

When they had finished reading it, the curé, pointing to Jean, said simply :

“ It was his father !”

The two women drew near the tombstone and stood with bowed heads for a few moments, affected, pensive, in meditation. Then turning around, they both at the same moment held out their hand to the young officer and went on toward the church. Jean’s father had had their first prayer at Longueval.

The curé went to put on his surplice and stole—Jean conducted Mrs. Scott to the pew, which for two centuries had been reserved for the owners of Longueval.

Pauline had preceded them. She was waiting for Miss Percival, in the shadow of a column in the church. She led Bettina up the steep narrow staircase into the gallery, and seated her at the harmonium.

The old curé came out of the sacristy preceded by two choristers, and just as he knelt down on the steps of the altar :

“ This is the moment, mademoiselle,” said Pauline, whose heart was beating with eagerness. “ Poor dear man, how happy he will be !”

When he heard the organ’s strain rise softly, like a murmur on the air, and swelling, fill the little church, the Abbé Constantin was touched with such

tender emotion that the tears came to his eyes. It was the first time he had wept since that day when Jean told him that he wanted to share all that he had with the mothers and sisters of those who fell at his father's side, under the German bullets.

That tears might come again to the old priest's eyes, it was necessary that a little American girl should cross the sea, and come to play one of Chopin's Reveries in the church at Longueval.

IV.

THE next morning at half-past five the bugle sounded through the quarters. Jean mounted, and took command of his section.

At the end of May all the recruits in the army are trained, and ready to take part in the general drill. Almost every day they execute different maneuvers with the field batteries.

Jean loved his profession ; he was accustomed to superintend with the greatest care the caparison and harness of the horses, and the equipment and bearing of his men ; but this morning he gave very little attention to these small details of the service.

A problem troubled him, perplexed him, left him undecided, and this problem was one of those whose solution is not given in the Polytechnic School. Jean could not find the exact answer to this question :

“ Which of the two is the prettier ? ”

On drill, during the first part of the maneuvers each battery works independently, under the captain's orders—but he often puts one of his lieu-

tenants in his place, so that he may be accustomed to the command of six pieces. That very morning it so happened that from the beginning of the maneuver the command was given to Jean. To the captain's great surprise, who considered his first lieutenant a very well-trained, competent, skillful officer, everything went wrong. Jean ordered two or three false movements—and neither keeping up nor correcting the distances, the horses several times came in contact. The captain was obliged to interfere. He gave Jean a slight reprimand which ended in these words:

“I cannot understand it. What is the matter with you this morning? It is the first time this ever happened.”

And it was also the first time that Jean ever saw on parade anything besides guns and drums, anything besides soldiers and leaders. In the clouds of dust raised by the carriage wheels and the horses' feet Jean saw, not the second mounted battery of the 9th Artillery, but the distinct image of two Americans with dark eyes under golden hair. And at the very moment when he was receiving the merited rebuke of his captain Jean was saying to himself:

“Madame Scott is the prettier.”

The drill is divided every morning by a little rest

of ten minutes. The officers get together and chat. Jean stayed by himself, alone with his memories of the day before. His thoughts returned, persistently, to the parsonage at Longueval. Yes, Mrs. Scott was the more charming of the two. Miss Percival was only a child. He saw again Mrs. Scott at the curé's little table. He heard again her story, told with such frankness and so naïvely. The slightly foreign tone of her peculiar, penetrating voice still charmed his ears—he was again in the church. She was there in front of him, bending over her *prie-dieu*, her pretty head in her two little hands. Then the organ began to sound, and in the shadows at a distance Jean could see Bettina's elegant, refined profile.

A child! Was she only a child? The trumpets sounded. The drill began again. Fortunately, this time, no more commands, no more responsibilities. The four batteries executed the evolutions together. This large body of men, horses and carriages could be seen wheeling in every way, sometimes drawn out in a long line of battle, sometimes contracted into a compact body. The soldiers leaped from their horses, saw to the gun, took it off the carriage, which went off on a trot—and put it in place ready for firing with surprising rapidity. Then the carriages returned, the guns were mounted again,

the soldiers sprang into the saddle and the regiment rushed across the field at a rapid rate.

Bettina began slowly to get the advantage of Mrs. Scott in Jean's thoughts. She appeared to him smiling and blushing amid the sunlit waves of her disheveled hair—*Monsieur Jean*—she called him *Monsieur Jean*, and his name never sounded so pleasant to him—and those last hand-shakings at parting as they got into the carriage. Miss Percival's was a little warmer than Mrs. Scott's—a very little—really—she had taken off her gloves to play the organ, and Jean could still feel the pressure of the little bare hand which lay, fresh and soft, in the artillery-man's ugly paw.

"I was mistaken just now," said Jean to himself, "Miss Percival is the prettier."

The drill was over. The batteries drew up close behind one another, the guns exactly in line, and the regiment filed off with a great uproar, a whirlwind of dust. When Jean, sword in hand, passed in front of the colonel, the two images of the two sisters were so blended and confused in his memory that they united, and in some way disappeared in each other, and became one and the same person. All comparison became impossible through the strange ambiguity of the parallel terms.

Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival remained thus in-

separable in Jean's mind until he could see them again. The impression made by their unexpected meeting was not effaced; it remained so fresh and sweet that Jean was restless and disturbed.

"Can it be," said he to himself, "that I have been so foolish as to fall in love at first sight? But, no; one falls in love with one woman—not two women at once."

That encouraged him. He was very young—this big boy—twenty-four years old. Love had never come fully, freely, openly into his heart. He knew very little about love, except in novels, and he had read very few novels. He was not an angel, however. He found the grisettes of Souvigny graceful and pretty enough; when they wanted him to tell them they were charming he said so very willingly, but as for thinking of love in connection with these trivial, ephemeral fancies, he never thought of such a thing.

Paul de Lavardens had wonderful power of passion and imagination. His heart could always accommodate three or four intense love affairs at the same time, which lived there, fraternally, on the best of terms. Paul had the talent of finding in this little town of fifteen thousand souls any number of pretty girls, all ready to be adored. He was in a perpetual state of discovering America, when in truth he only returned to it.

Jean had seen very little of the world. Paul had taken him perhaps a dozen times to balls and parties at the neighboring chateaux. He had come away with a feeling of constraint, of embarrassment and *ennui*. He concluded that such entertainments were not for him. His tastes were simple and sedate. He liked solitude, labor, long walks, open space, horses, books. He was somewhat rustic and provincial. He loved his native village and all the old relics of his childhood, which spoke to him of bygone days. A quadrille in a sal^{on} struck terror to his heart, but every year at the *fête pratronale* at Longueval he danced merrily enough with the farmers' wives and daughters.

If he had seen Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival at home in Paris, in all the splendid luxury and brilliant elegance of their surroundings, he would have looked at them from a distance, with curiosity, as charming *objects d'art*. Then he would have gone home and slept no doubt, as usual, as peacefully as possible.

Yes, but that was not the way it had happened, and hence his surprise, his trouble. These two women, by the merest chance, had appeared to him amid surroundings which were familiar to him, and which for that reason had been singularly favorable to them. Simple, good, frank and cordial they had

been that first day, and charmingly pretty in the bargain, which never hurts anything. Jean fell under the charm at once—and he was there yet.

At the hour when he was dismounting at the quarters the Abbé Constantin was starting joyfully on his campaign. The old priest's head was completely turned. Jean had not slept very much, and the poor curé had not slept at all.

He rose very early in the morning, and with all the doors closed, alone with Pauline, he counted his money over and over, spreading his hundred louis out on the table, and taking as much delight in handling them as a miser. All that money belonged to him! to him! that is, to his poor.

"Don't go too fast, Monsieur le Curé," said Pauline. "Be economical. I think a hundred francs is enough to distribute to-day."

"It is not enough, Pauline; it is not enough. I can have but one such day in my life, but I shall have that. Do you know how much I am going to give away, Pauline?"

"How much, Monsieur le Curé?"

"A thousand francs."

"A thousand francs?"

"Yes, we are millionaires now. All the treasure of America is ours, and shall I practice economy? Not to-day at any rate. I have no right."

At nine o'clock, having said mass, he started out, and there was a shower of gold all along his way. They all had their share; those who confessed their poverty, and those who tried to conceal it. Every gift was accompanied with the same little speech :

“ This comes from the new owners of Longueval, two Americans—Madame Scott, and Miss Percival. Remember the names, and pray for them to-night.”

Then he went away, without waiting for thanks; across the fields, through the wood, from hamlet to hamlet, from cottage to cottage. A kind of intoxication possessed him. Everywhere that he went there were exclamations of joy and astonishment. All these gold pieces fell, as by a miracle, into these poor hands accustomed to receive only little pieces of silver.

The curé committed follies, real follies. He did not know what he was doing, he was beside himself. He gave even to those who did not ask.

He met Claude Rigal, an old sergeant who had left one of his arms at Sébastopol, now growing gray, for time passes and the soldiers of the Crimea will soon be old men.

“ Here,” said the curé, “ here are twenty francs for you.”

"Twenty francs! but I ask for nothing, I do not need it. I have my pension."

His pension! seven hundred francs!

"Very well!" replied the curé, "this will buy you some cigars; but listen, this comes from America." He repeated his little *story* about the new owners of Longueval.

He visited a good woman whose son had been ordered to Tunis.

"Well! how is your son?"

"Very well, Monsieur le Curé, I received a letter yesterday. He is very well, and he does not complain. Poor boy! I have been saving for a month, and I think I shall soon have ten francs to send him."

"You can send him thirty. Take this."

"Twenty francs, Monsieur le Curé! You give me twenty francs!"

"Yes, I give them to you."

"For my boy?"

"For your boy. Only listen, you must know where they come from; and you must be sure to tell your son when you write to him."

The curé for the twentieth time repeated his panegyric of Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival.

He reached home at six o'clock, exhausted with fatigue, but joy in his soul.

"I have given it all away!" he cried as soon as he saw Pauline, "given it all! given it all!"

He dined, and then went in the evening to recite his service for the month of Mary; but when he went up to the altar the harmonium was mute—Miss Percival was no longer there.

The little organist of the day before was at that moment very much perplexed. Spread out on the two divans in her dressing-room were the marvelous waves of a white toilette and a blue toilette; and Bettina was trying to decide which of these two dresses she should wear that evening to the opera. Both were charming, but it was necessary to make a choice. She could wear only one. After hesitating a long time she decided on the white one.

At half-past nine the sisters were going up the grand staircase at the opera. As they entered their box the curtain was rising on the second scene in the second act of *Aïda*—the act with the ballet and the march.

Two young men, Roger de Puymartin and Louis de Mortillet, were sitting in the front row of a box on the floor of the house. The ballet-dancers were not yet *en scène*, and these gentlemen having nothing to do amused themselves by looking around the house.

The appearance of Miss Percival made quite a sensation for them both.

“Ah! ah!” said Puymartin, “there she is, the little nugget of gold!”

Both turned their opera-glasses upon Bettina.

“She is dazzling to-night—the little gold nugget—just look at the turn of her shoulders—the curves of her arms—a young girl, and yet a woman.”

“Yes, she is exquisite—and made of money in the bargain.”

“Fifteen millions, it seems; fifteen millions in her own right, and silver mines increase in value.”

“Bérulle told me, twenty-five millions, and Bérulle is well posted on American affairs.”

“Twenty-five millions! A nice little plum for Romanelli!”

“How for Romanelli?”

“Report says that he is to marry her, that the marriage is decided.”

“It may be that a marriage is arranged, but with Montessan, not with Romanelli. Ah! here is the ballet at last!”

They stopped talking. The ballet in *Aïda* lasts only five minutes, and both these young men came on purpose for those five minutes. It behooved them to enjoy them, respectfully, religiously; for there is this peculiarity about a certain class of *habitués* of the opera, that they chatter like magpies

when they ought to be silent and listen, and, on the contrary, they preserve an admirable silence when they would be permitted to talk while looking.

The trumpets had sounded their last flourish in honor of Radamés. In front of the great Sphinx, beneath the green palm trees, the glittering ballet dancers advanced and took possession of the stage.

Mrs. Scott watched the evolutions of the ballet with much interest and pleasure; but Bettina suddenly became thoughtful as she saw in a box on the other side of the house a tall, dark young man. Miss Percival was debating, and said to herself:

“What shall I do? How shall I decide? Must I marry that tall handsome young man opposite me who stares at me so, through his opera-glass—for it is I he is watching—he will come here presently during the *entr’acte*; and when he comes, I have only to say to him, ‘It is done! Here is my hand—I will be your wife’—and it would be done. Princesse, I would be Princesse! Princesse Romanelli! Princesse Bettina! Bettina Romanelli! It harmonizes well, it sounds very agreeable: ‘Madame la Princesse is served.’ ‘Will Madame la Princesse go to ride to-morrow morning?’ Would it amuse me to be Princesse? Among all the young men in Paris who for a year have been running after my

money this Prince Romanelli is the best of them all. I must make up my mind to marry, some day. I think he loves me. Yes, but do I love him? No, I think not; and I would like so much to love! Oh! yes, I would like it so much!"

At the very hour when these thoughts were occupying Bettina's pretty head Jean was sitting alone at his desk, with a big book under the lamp shade, looking over the history of Turenne's campaigns, and taking notes. He had been instructed to deliver a course of lectures to the non-commissioned officers, and he was very prudently preparing for the next day's duty.

But all at once in the midst of his notes, *Nordlingen*, 1645; *les dunes*, 1658; *Mulhausen et Turckheim*, 1674-1675; there appeared a sketch—Jean did not draw badly—the picture of a woman came of its own accord under his pen. What was she doing there in the midst of Turenne's victories, this pretty little woman? And then, which one was it? Mrs. Scott or Miss Percival? How did he know? They were so much alike! And painfully and laboriously Jean returned to the history of Turenne's campaigns.

At that same hour the Abbé Constantin, on his knees beside his little walnut bedstead, was calling all the blessings of heaven on the two

women who had caused him to spend such a sweet happy day.

He prayed God to bless Mrs. Scott in her children, and to give Miss Percival a husband after her heart.

V.

FORMERLY Paris belonged to Parisians, and that formerly is not so very distant—thirty or forty years at most. The French at that period owned Paris—just as the English own London, the Spanish Madrid, and the Russians St. Petersburg. That time has passed. There are yet frontiers for other countries; there are no longer any for France. Paris has become an immense tower of Babel, an international, miscellaneous city. Foreigners do not only come to visit Paris; they come to live there.

We have now in Paris a Russian colony, a Spanish colony, a Turkish colony, an American colony; these colonies have their churches, their bankers, their physicians, their newspapers, their ministers, their priests and their dentists. Foreigners have already made conquest of the larger part of the Champs-Élysées and the Boulevard Malesherbes; they advance, they spread—we retreat, driven back by the invasion; we are forced to expatriate ourselves. We are obliged to found colonies in the plain of Possy,

in the plain of Monceau, in quarters which formerly were not Paris at all, and which are not yet altogether Paris.

Among these foreign colonies the most numerous, the richest, the most brilliant, is the American colony. There comes a moment when an American feels that he is rich enough ; a Frenchman, never. The American then stops, takes breath, and while taking care of his capital, no longer saves his income ; he knows how to spend ; the Frenchman knows only how to save.

A Frenchman has only one single luxury, his revolutions. Prudently and wisely he saves himself for them, knowing well they cost France dearly, but that at the same time they will be the occasion of very advantageous investments. The financial history of our country is only one long loan, perpetually open. The Frenchman says to himself :

“ Hoard ! hoard ! hoard ! Some of these days there will be a revolution which will make the five per cents fall to fifty or sixty francs. I will buy some. Since revolutions are inevitable, let us at least try to derive some profit from them.”

It is continually told how many people are ruined by revolutions, but a still larger number of people are enriched by revolutions.

Americans yield readily to the attractions of Paris.

There is nowhere in the world a city where a fortune can be spent more easily or more agreeably. By reason of their parentage and origin, this attraction was felt by Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival to an extraordinary degree.

Canada, which no longer belongs to us, is the most *French* of our colonies. The recollection of the mother-country is still strong and sweet to the heart of the exile in Quebec and Montreal. Suzie Percival had received from her mother an entirely French education, and she had brought up her sister in the same love for France.

As soon as the avalanche of millions descended upon them the same desire took possession of both—to live in Paris. They desired Paris, as one's country is desired. Mr. Scott made some opposition.

"When I am no longer here," said he, "and only come to spend two or three months of every year in America, to look after your interests, you will find that your incomes will diminish."

"What does it matter!" replied Suzie, "we are rich, too rich. Let us go, I entreat you. We will be so contented! so happy!"

Mr. Scott allowed himself to be persuaded; and early in January, 1880, Suzie wrote to her friend Katie Norton, who had been living in Paris for years, the following letter:

“Victory! It is decided! Richard has consented. I shall arrive in April and become French again. You have offered to take charge of all the preparations for our establishment in Paris. I am horribly inconsiderate—I accept.

“I would like to be able to enjoy Paris as soon as I get there, and not lose my first month chasing after upholsterers, carriagemakers and horse-dealers. I would like to find at the station when I get off the train *my* carriage, *my* coachman and *my* horses. I would like to dine *with myself* at my own house. Either rent or buy a house, engage servants, choose the carriages, the horses, the liveries. I leave it all to you. Only let the liveries be blue, that is all. This line is added at Bettina’s request, who is looking over my shoulder as I write you.

“We shall bring with us to France only seven persons. Richard will bring his valet; Bettina and I and our maids, two governesses for the children, and two boys, Toby and Bobby, our little grooms. They ride so well. Two perfect little loves; the same height, the same figures, almost the same faces; we could never find in Paris grooms better matched.

“Everything else, servants and furniture we leave in New York. No, not everything. I forgot to mention four little ponies, four little jewels—black

as ink, with white feet all around—all four of them; we did not have the heart to leave them. We drive them in a phaeton, and both Bettina and I can drive four-in-hand very well. Can women drive four-in-hand early in the morning in the Bois without too much scandal? They can here.

“Above all, my dear Katie, do not count the cost. Spend money foolishly, like a spendthrift. That is all I ask of you.”

The same day that Mrs. Norton received this letter the news came out of the failure of a certain Garneville, a large speculator, who had overreached himself. He had prepared for a fall when he should have been ready for a rise. This Garneville had taken possession of a house only six weeks before, newly built, and with no other fault than a too glaring magnificence.

Mrs. Norton took a lease of it at a hundred thousand francs a year, with the privilege of buying the house and furniture at two millions during the first year. A fashionable upholsterer was engaged to correct and modify the excessive luxury of the gaudy, staring furniture. That done, Mrs. Scott's friend was so fortunate as to put her hand, the very first thing, on two of those eminent artists, without whom no large house can be properly established or carried on.

In the first place, a first-class *chef de cuisine* who had just left an old family in the faubourg Saint Germain—to his great regret—for his sentiments were aristocratic. It was very painful to him to go into the service of foreigners.

“Never,” said he to Mrs. Norton, “never would I have left the service of Madame la Baronne, if she had kept up her household on the same footing; but Madame la Baronne has four children—two sons who are spendthrifts, and two daughters who will soon be the proper age to marry. They must have marriage portions. So, Madame la Baronne is obliged to retrench a little, and the establishment is no longer extensive enough for me.” This distinguished artist had conditions to make, which, though extravagant, did not frighten Mrs. Norton, who knew she was negotiating with a man of unquestionable merit; but he, before deciding, asked permission to telegraph to New York. He wished to make some inquiries. The reply was favorable. He accepted.

The other great artist, who had been in charge of some of the leading racing stables, was of unusual talent, and was about to retire on the fortune he had made. He consented, however, to organize Mrs. Scott’s stables. It was understood that he was to have *carte blanche* in the purchase of horses,

was not to wear livery, was to select the coachman, grooms and ostlers; that there was never to be less than fifteen horses in the stable, that no bargain was to be made with a carriage maker or saddler except through him, and that he was to mount the box only in the morning, *in ordinary dress*, to give lessons in driving to the ladies and children, if it were necessary.

The *chef* took possession of his ranges, and the head groom of his stables. All the rest was only a question of money, and Mrs. Norton used to the utmost the full powers given her. She carried out the instructions she had received. In the short period of two months she performed real miracles, so that the Scott establishment was absolutely complete, and absolutely faultless.

And so when, at half-past four, on the 15th of April, 1880, Mr. Scott, Suzie and Bettina alighted from the Havre express, on the platform of the station at Saint Lazare, they found Mrs. Norton, who said to them :

“Your *calèche* is here, in the court—behind the *calèche* is a landau, for the children; and behind the landau an omnibus for the servants. The three carriages bear your monogram, are driven by your coachmen, and drawn by your horses. You live at 24 Rue Murillo, and here is the *menu* of your dinner

this evening. You invited me two months ago, I have accepted, and even taken the liberty of bringing fifteen people with me. I have provided everything, even the guests. Do not be alarmed! You know them all, they are mutual friends; and from this evening we can judge of the merits of your cook."

Mrs. Norton gave Mrs. Scott a pretty little *carte* with a gold band, on which were these words:

"*Menu du diner du 15 Avril, 1880.*"

and below:

"*Consommé à la Parisienne,*

"*Truites saumonées à la russe, etc.*"

The first Parisian who had the honor and pleasure of doing homage to the beauty of Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival was a little scullion, about fifteen years old, who, dressed in white, his willow basket on his head, was passing just as Mrs. Scott's coachman was making his way slowly through the crowd of carriages at the station. The little scullion stopped short on the sidewalk, stood glaring in amazement at the two sisters, and then boldly shouted, full in their faces, the single word:

"*Mazette!*"

When she saw wrinkles and white hair begin to

ccme, Madame Recamier said to one of her friends :

“ Ah ! *ma chère*, there are no more illusions for me. Ever since the day when I saw that the little chimney-sweeps no longer turned in the street to look at me, I knew that it was all over.”

The opinion of little scullions is worth as much in similar cases as the opinion of chimney-sweeps. All was not over for Suzie and Bettina. On the contrary, all was just beginning.

Five minutes later Mrs. Scott's *calèche* was rolling along the Boulevard Haussman at the slow, measured pace of two admirable horses ; Paris numbered two Parisians more. The success of Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival was immediate, decided, and startling. The beauties of Paris are not classified and catalogued like the beauties of London. They do not have their portraits published in the illustrated journals, and they do not allow their photographs to be on sale at the stationers' ; there always exist, however, a little staff of about twenty women who represent the grace, the elegance and the beauty of Paris—and these women after ten or a dozen years of service pass into the reserve corps, like old generals.

Suzie and Bettina at once took their places on this little staff. It was the affair of twenty-four hours—not even twenty-four hours, for it all was done be-

tween eight o'clock in the morning and midnight of the day following their arrival.

Imagine a sort of spectacle in the three acts, the success of which increased with each tableau.

1st. A ride on horseback in the Bois, at ten o'clock in the morning, with the two marvelous grooms imported from America.

2nd. A walk at six o'clock in the *Allée des Acacias*.

3rd. An appearance in the evening, in Mrs. Norton's box at the Opera.

The two newcomers were immediately noticed and appreciated by the thirty or forty persons who constitute a sort of mysterious tribunal, and render in the name of all Paris a verdict from which there is no appeal. These thirty or forty people have from time to time a fancy for declaring *charming* some woman who is obviously ugly. That is enough. She is *charming*, dating from that day.

The beauty of the two sisters was beyond dispute. In the morning, their grace, their elegance and air of distinction were admired; in the afternoon, it was declared that they had the free, firm steps of young goddesses; and in the evening there was only one voice as to the ideal perfection of their shoulders. The game was won. All Paris, from that time, saw the two sisters with the eyes of the little scullion on

the Rue d'Amsterdam; all Paris repeated his "*Mazette!*" that is, with the changes and variations imposed by the customs of society.

Mrs. Scott's sal^{on} immediately took shape. The *habitués* of three or four great American houses went *en masse* to see the Scotts, who had three hundred people at their first Wednesday. Their circle increased very rapidly; there was a little of everything in their list: Americans, Spaniards, Italians, Hungarians, Russians, and even Parisians.

When Mrs. Scott related her history to the Abbé Constantin she did not tell him everything; one never does tell everything. She knew that she was charming, liked to have it acknowledged, and did not hate to be told so. In short, she was a coquette. Would she have been a Parisian, otherwise? Mr. Scott had full confidence in his wife, and allowed her perfect freedom. He was seldom seen.

He was an honest man, and felt sometimes embarrassed that he had made such a marriage, that he had married so much money. Having a taste for business, he took pleasure in devoting himself entirely to the management of the two enormous fortunes in his hands, in increasing it constantly, and in saying every year to his wife and sister-in-law:

"You are still richer than you were last year."

Not contented with guarding with much interest

and skill the investments which he had left in America, he embarked in large enterprises in France, and succeeded in Paris as he had succeeded in New York. In order to make money, there is nothing like having no need to make it.

Mrs. Scott was courted, she was courted immensely. She was courted in French, in English, in Spanish, in Italian—for she knew these four languages—and this is another advantage which foreigners have over poor Parisians, who generally know only their mother-tongue and have not the resource of international passions.

Mrs. Scott did not drive people out of doors with a stick. She had ten, twenty, thirty adorers at the same time. None of them could boast of any preference whatever; she was the same to all—agreeable, playful, smiling. It was clear that she only amused herself at the game, and never took a serious part in it. She played for the pleasure, the honor, the love of the art. Mr. Scott never had the least uneasiness; he was perfectly right in being undisturbed. Moreover, he enjoyed the success of his wife; he was happy in seeing her happy. He loved her very much—a little more than she loved him—she loved him very well, and that explains all. There is a great difference between *well* and *much* when these two adverbs are placed after the verb *to love*.

As for Bettina, there was around her a curious chase—a detestable circle! Such a fortune! Such a beauty! Miss Percival arrived in Paris on the 15th of April; a fortnight had not passed before offers of marriage began to rain down. In the course of the first year Bettina amused herself keeping this little account very exactly—in the course of the first year she might, if she had wished, have married thirty-four times—and such a variety of aspirants.

Her hand was asked for a young exile, who in certain events might be called to a throne—quite small, it is true, but still a throne.

Her hand was asked for a young duke, who would make a great figure at court when France—and this was inevitable!—should recognize her errors and return to her legitimate rulers.

Her hand was asked for a young prince, who would take his place on the steps of the throne when France—and this was inevitable!—should reunite the chain of Napoleonic traditions.

Her hand was asked for a young Republican member, who had just made a very brilliant *début* at the *Chambre*, and for whom the future had brilliant destinies in store, for the Republic was now established in France upon indestructible foundations.

Her hand was asked for a young Spaniard of the highest rank, and it was intimated to her that the ceremonials of the contract would take place in the palace of a queen, who lives not very far from the *Arc de l'Etoile*. . . . Her name is found, too, in the *Almanac Bottin*, for there are queens whose names are in *Bottin* to-day between a notary and a herborist. It is only the kings of France who no longer live in France.

Her hand was asked for the son of an English peer, and for the son of a member of the House of Lords in Vienna; for the son of a banker in Paris, and the son of a Russian ambassador; for a Hungarian count and for an Italian prince; and also for brave little young men who had nothing, neither name nor fortune. But Miss Bettina gave them all a turn in the waltz; and believing themselves to be irresistible, they hoped to have made her heart beat.

Nothing up to the present had made her little heart beat, and the reply to all had been the same :

“No! no! Still no! Always no!”

Some days after the performance of *Aïda*, the two sisters had a long conversation on this important, eternal question of marriage. A certain name mentioned by Mrs. Scott provoked the most distinct and energetic refusal on Miss Percival's part.

And Suzie, laughing, said to her sister : “ You will, however, be forced to marry at last, Bettina.”

“ Yes, certainly ; but I should be so sorry, Suzie, to marry without love. It seems to me that to make up my mind to do such a thing, there would have to be every chance of dying an old maid ; and I am not that yet.”

“ No, not yet.”

“ Let us wait then, let us wait !”

“ We will wait ! But among all these lovers whom you have dragged after you for a year there have been some very handsome, agreeable ones ; and it is certainly a little strange that none of them——”

“ None ! dear Suzie, absolutely not one ! Why should I not tell you the truth ? Is it their fault ? Have they been awkward ? Would they, if they had been more skillful, have found the way to my heart ? Or is it my fault ? Can this road to my heart be, perhaps, a horrible, steep, stony, inaccessible road, by which no one can pass ? Can I be a wicked little creature, hard and cold, and condemned never to love ?”

“ I do not think so.”

“ Nor I, either ; I have never felt anything which resembles love. You laugh—and I can guess why you laugh. You are saying to yourself, ‘ Look at this little girl who pretends to know what it is to

love! You are right, I do not know; but I can imagine a little. To love, dear Suzie, is it not to prefer a certain person to every one, to all the world?"

"Yes, it is very much like that."

"And not to be tired of seeing that person and hearing him? Is it not to cease to live when he is no longer here, and to begin to live again as soon as he reappears?"

"Oh! oh, that would be a very great love!"

"Ah! well! that is love as I dream of it."

"And that is the love that never comes!"

"Oh! yes, it does. And yet the person preferred by me, to every one else—do you know who it is?"

"No! I do not know, but I have a slight suspicion."

"Yes, it is you, my darling, and perhaps it is you, my naughty sister, who makes me so insensible and cruel. I love you too much. All my love—you have all my love—there is no room for any one else. To prefer some one to you! To love some one better than you—I never can!"

"Oh, yes——"

"Oh, no! To love in another way, perhaps? but better, no. He need not expect it, the man I am waiting for and who does not come."

“Do not fear, dear Betty. There will be room in your heart for all whom you should love—for your husband, for your children—and that, too, without making me, your old sister, lose anything. The heart is very little, but it is very large.”

Bettina kissed her sister tenderly, then leaning her head coaxingly on Suzie’s shoulder :

“If, however, you are tired of keeping me here with you, if you are in a hurry to be rid of me, do you know what I will do ? I will put the names of two of these gentlemen in a basket and draw lots. There are two, who, strictly speaking, would not be positively disagreeable to me.”

“Which two ?”

“Guess.”

“The Prince Romanelli’s ?”

“He is one; and the other ?”

“M. de Montessan.”

“Two. The very two. Yes, these two would be acceptable—but only acceptable, and that is not enough.”

This is why Bettina awaited with extreme impatience the day of their departure for Longueval. She was tired of so much pleasure, of so much success, and so many offers of marriage. The whirlpool of Paris life had drawn her in, from the day of her arrival, and would not release her. Not an hour of

rest, or quiet. She felt the need of being left to herself, alone with herself, for a few days at least ; to consult and question herself, at her leisure, in the quiet and solitude of the country, to belong to herself again at last.

So Bettina was very merry and glad when they took the train for Longueval on the 14th of June at noon. As soon as she found herself alone with her sister :

"Ah !" she cried, "how happy I am ! We can take breath. To be alone with you for ten days ! for the Nortons and the Turners do not come until the 25th, do they ?"

"No, not until the 25th."

"We will spend our time on horseback and driving in the forests, in the fields. Ten days of freedom. And during all the ten days, no lovers ! no lovers ! and all these lovers, *mon dieu !* what are they in love with ? With me, or my money ? That is the mystery, the impenetrable mystery."

The engine whistled, the train was slowly moving. A crazy little whim seized Bettina, she leaned out of the window and cried, waving her hand :

"Adieu, my lovers, adieu !" Then she threw herself back in her seat and laughed like a child.

"Oh ! Suzie ! Suzie !"

"What is the matter ?"

“ A man with a red flag in his hand—he saw me ! He heard me ! And he looked so astonished.”

“ You are so foolish !”

“ Yes, that is true—to cry out at the window in such a way—but not to be happy at the thought that we will be all alone, only we two——”

“ All alone ! all alone ! Not quite alone. To begin with, we will have two persons to dine with us this evening.”

“ Ah ! that is true, and I shall not be at all sorry to see those two persons again. Yes, I shall be very glad to see the old curé, and still more the young officer.”

“ What ! still more ?”

“ Certainly ; because it was so touching, what the notary at Souvigny told us the other day, it was so good, what this tall artillery officer did when he was so little, so good, so good, so good, that I shall seek an occasion this evening to tell him what I think of it, and I shall find one !”

Then Bettina abruptly changing the conversation :
“ Was a dispatch sent to Edwards yesterday, for the ponies ?”

“ Yes, before dinner.”

“ Will you let me drive to the chateau ? It would please me so much to go through the village, make a grand *entrée* and come up with a round turn in front of the steps”

"Yes, yes, it is agreed that you are to drive the ponies."

"Ah! how good you are, dear Suzie!"

Edwards had arrived at the chateau three days before, to see that everything connected with the stable was in order. He condescended to come himself for Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival. He brought the four ponies in the phaeton. He was waiting at the station surrounded by quite a little crowd. Nearly all Souvigny was there. The ponies, driven through the principal streets, had made quite a sensation. Everybody came out and asked eagerly :

"What is the matter? What is going on?"

Some ventured the opinion :

"A traveling circus, perhaps."

But from every side came the reply :

"You did not see, then, what it was like—the carriage, and the harness which shone like gold, and the little horses with white roses on each side of their heads."

A crowd had gathered in the station-yard, and the curious had learned that they were to have the honor of being present at the arrival of the ladies of Longueval.

There was a slight feeling of disappointment when the two sisters appeared—very pretty, but very simple, in their traveling costumes.

These good people had a slight expectation of seeing two fairy princesses, clothed in silk and brocade, sparkling in rubies and diamonds.

But they stared in amazement when they saw Bettina go slowly round the four ponies, stroking one after the other lightly, and examining each detail of the harness with a knowing air.

It must be acknowledged that it was not disagreeable to Bettina to produce such an effect on all this crowd of wondering provincials.

Her little review over, Bettina, without too much haste, drew off her kid gloves, and drew on a pair of buckskin driving gloves, which she took from a pocket in the apron.

Then she slipped, in some way, into the seat, in Edwards' place; receiving from him the reins and the whip, with great dexterity, before the horses had time to be conscious that they had changed hands. Mrs. Scott was seated at her sister's side. The ponies stamped, pranced, and threatened to rear.

"Mademoiselle must be on the lookout — the ponies are full of life to-day," said Edwards.

"Never fear," replied Bettina, "I understand them."

Miss Percival's hand was very firm and at the same time very light and true. She held the ponies a

few moments, forcing them to keep well in rank, then covering the horses with a long double curve of her whip, she started her little equipage off at a single bound, with incomparable skill, and drove royally out of the station-yard, followed by a long murmur of astonishment and admiration.

The trot of the four ponies resounded on the pavement of Souvigny. In going through the town she kept a tight rein, but as soon as she reached the open, level road she gave the ponies their heads and they went like lightning. "Oh! how happy I am, Suzie!" she cried. "We will trot and gallop on these roads all by ourselves. Do you want to drive, Suzie? It is such a pleasure when you can let them go like this. They are such goers and so gentle, take the reins——"

"No, keep them; it pleases me to see you so pleased."

"Oh! I am delighted! I like so much to drive four-in-hand, when there is room enough to go fast. In Paris, even in the morning, I did not dare—people stared so, and that annoyed me. But here—no one! no one! no one!"

Just as Bettina, exhilarated with the fresh air and freedom, cried triumphantly: "No one! no one! no one!" a horseman appeared coming slowly toward the carriage.

It was Paul de Lavardens. He had been on the watch for an hour, for the pleasure of seeing the Americans pass.

"You are mistaken," said Suzie to Bettina. "Here comes some one."

"A peasant. A peasant does not count; he will not ask to marry me."

"He is not a peasant at all. Look!"

Paul de Lavardens, as he passed the side of the carriage, bowed to the two sisters in a manner so entirely correct as to proclaim him, at once, a Parisian.

The ponies were going so fast that the meeting was like a flash of lightning. Bettina cried:

"Who is the gentlemen who just bowed to us?"

"I hardly had time to see him, but it seems to me that I know him."

"You know him?"

"Yes, and I would wager that I saw him last winter in my own house."

"*Mon Dieu!* Can he be one of the thirty-four?"

"Is it going to begin again?"

VI.

ON that same day, at half-past seven o'clock, Jean went to the parsonage for the curé, and together they took the road to the chateau.

For a month an army of workmen had been in possession of the chateau ; the village inns and wine shops had made a fortune. Immense freight-wagons had brought cargoes of furniture and upholsteries from Paris. Forty-eight hours before Mrs. Scott's arrival Mademoiselle Morbeau, the directress of the post, and Madame Lormier, the mayor's wife, had made their way into the chateau ; their accounts turned every one's head. The old furniture had disappeared, banished to the attic ; one wandered through a perfect museum of marvels. And the stables ! and the coach houses ! A special train had brought from Paris, under Edward's personal supervision, twelve carriages, and such carriages ! Twenty horses, and such horses !

The Abbé Constantin thought he knew what luxury was. Once a year he dined with his bishop, Monseigneur Foubert, an amiable, rich prelate, who

entertained largely. The curé, until now, had thought nothing could be more sumptuous than the episcopal palace at Souvigny, than the châteaux of Lavardens and Longueval. He began to understand, after what he heard of the new splendors of Longueval, that the luxury of the fine houses of to-day wonderfully surpasses the heavy, severe luxury of the ancient houses of former days.

After the curé and Jean had gone a short distance on the road leading to the château, through the park :

“Look, Jean,” said the curé, “what a change! All this part of the park used to be left uncared for, and see, now it is all graveled and raked. I shall no longer feel at home here, as formerly. I shall not find my old maroon velvet armchair, in which it so often happened that I fell asleep after dinner. And if I go to sleep this evening, what will become of me? You must keep watch, Jean. If you see that I am beginning to get sleepy, you must come behind me and pinch my arm a little. You promise me?”

“Yes, godfather, I promise you.”

Jean listened only indifferently to the cure’s discourse. He was very impatient to see Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival again ; but his impatience was mingled with very great anxiety. Was he going to find them, in the grand salôn of Longueval, the same

as he had seen them in the little dining-room at the parsonage? Perhaps, instead of two women so perfectly simple and easy, enjoying their improvised dinner, on that first day—who met him so graciously and affably—he was going to find two fashionable dolls, elegant, cold and correct. Was his first impression going to be effaced, to disappear? Or would it, on the contrary, grow deeper and sweeter in his heart?

They went up the steps, and were received in the lobby by two tall footmen with the most dignified and imposing of manners. This lobby was formerly an immense room, cheerless and bare, in its walls of stone; to-day the walls were covered with beautiful tapestries representing mythological subjects. The curé scarcely looked at the tapestries, but that was enough to perceive that the goddesses who were walking in the fields wore costumes of antique simplicity.

One of the footmen opened the folding doors of the grand sal^{on}. Here the old marchioness was usually sitting, at the right of the large fireplace, and on the left stood the maroon armchair. The maroon armchair was there no longer. The old furniture of the time of the Empire was replaced by furniture of marvelous antique tapestry, and a great many little chairs and little *poufs* of all

colors and shapes were placed here and there with an appearance of disorder which was the height of art.

Mrs. Scott, on seeing the curé and Jean, rose, and going to meet them, said :

"How kind of you to come, Monsieur le Curé, and you too, monsieur ; and I am glad to see you again, my first, my only friends here !"

Jean breathed again. It was just the same woman.

"Permit me," added Mrs. Scott, "to present my children to you—Harry, Bella, come here."

Harry was a very pretty little boy of six years, and Bella a very pretty little girl of five ; they had their mother's large dark eyes and golden hair.

After the curé had kissed the two children Harry, who was looking admiringly at Jean's uniform, said to his mother :

"And the soldier—shall I kiss the soldier, too, mamma ?"

"If you like," replied Mrs. Scott, "and if he is willing."

The two children were installed on Jean's knees in a few minutes, and overwhelmed him with questions.

"Are you an officer ?"

"Yes, I am an officer."

“ In what ? ”

“ In the artillery.”

“ The artillery. They are the ones who fire off the cannon. Oh ! how much I would like to be very close to the cannon and hear it fire.”

“ Will you take us, some day, when they fire off the cannon ? say, will you ? ”

Mrs. Scott, during this time was talking with the curé, and Jean, while answering the children's questions, was looking at Mrs. Scott. She wore a dress of white muslin, but the muslin was almost concealed by a mass of valenciennes flounces. It was cut square in front, very low. Her arms were bare to the elbow, a large bunch of red roses on the corsage, and a red rose fastened in her hair with a diamond *agrafe* ; that was all.

Mrs. Scott suddenly saw that Jean was going through a military examination by the two children :

“ Oh ! I beg your pardon, monsieur ! Harry ! Bella ! ”

“ Leave them with me, I beg of you, madame.”

“ I am so sorry to keep you waiting for dinner ! My sister has not come down yet. Ah ! here she comes.”

Bettina entered. The same white muslin dress, the same profusion of lace, the same red roses, the same grace, the same beauty, the same smiling, *gracious, cordial welcome,*

"I beg you to excuse me, Monsieur le Curé. Have you pardoned me my horrible giddiness of the other day?"

Then turning to Jean and holding out her hand:

"*Bonjour, Monsieur . . . Monsieur.* Ah! I cannot recollect your name, and yet it seems to me that we are old friends? *Monsieur——?*"

"Jean Reynaud."

"Jean Reynaud, that is it. *Bonjour, Monsieur Reynaud!* but I give you fair warning that we shall be such old friends, in a week, that I shall call you Monsieur Jean. Jean is a very pretty name."

Dinner was announced. The governesses came for the children. Mrs. Scott took the curé's arm; Bettina, Jean's. Until the moment of Bettina's appearance, Jean had said to himself: "Mrs. Scott is the prettier!" When he saw Bettina's little hand slip into his arm, and when she turned her lovely face around to him he said to himself: "Miss Percival is the prettier!" But he fell back into the same perplexity when he was seated between the two sisters. If he looked to his right, it was on that side he saw himself threatened with falling in love; and if he turned to the left the danger immediately changed places, and passed over to the left side.

The conversation was animated, unreserved, and

easy. The two sisters were in raptures. They had already taken a walk in the park. They had promised themselves a long ride in the forest, the next day. To ride on horseback—that was their passion, their *folie*! And it was also Jean's passion; so much so that, at the end of fifteen minutes, he had been invited to join them the next day and had accepted with delight.

No one knew the vicinity better than he; it was his birthplace. He would be so happy to do the honors and show them any number of charming little places, which they never would discover without him.

“Do you ride every day?” asked Bettina.

“Every day and sometimes twice. In the morning on duty and in the evening for pleasure.”

“Early in the morning?”

“At half-past five.”

“At half-past five every morning?”

“Yes, except on Sunday.”

“Then you must rise——?”

“At half-past four.”

“And is it daylight?”

“Oh! at this season broad daylight.”

“That is astonishing, to rise at half-past four! Our day very often ends just at the hour when you are beginning yours. And do you like your profession?”

"Very much, mademoiselle. It is so pleasant to have your work lie straight before you, with all your duties plain and well-defined."

"Still," said Mrs. Scott, "not to be one's own master, to be obliged always to obey!"

"Perhaps that suits me best. There is nothing easier than to obey; and then, to learn to obey is the only way to learn to command."

"Ah! what you say is very true!"

"Yes, no doubt," said the curé; "but what he does not say is that he is the most distinguished officer in his regiment, is that——"

"Godfather, I beg of you."

The curé, in spite of Jean's protests, was going on with the panegyric of his godson, when Bettina interrupted:

"It is needless, Monsieur le Curé, to say anything. We know all that you would tell us. We have had the curiosity to inquire about—oh! I was going to say Monsieur Jean—about Monsieur Reynaud. But, indeed, the accounts were wonderful!"

"I am curious to know what they were," said Jean.

"Oh! nothing—nothing—you shall know nothing about them. I do not want to make you blush, and you would be obliged to blush."

Then turning to the curé:

“And about you too, Monsieur le Curé, we have had accounts of you. It seems that you are a saint.”

“Oh, as to that, it is quite true,” cried Jean.

This time, it was the curé who cut short Jean’s eloquence. The dinner was nearly over. The old priest had not gone through the dinner without considerable trepidation. Several times he had been served with unknown complicated constructions, upon which he ventured with a trembling hand—he was afraid everything would tumble to pieces: quivering castles of jelly, pyramids of truffles, fortresses of cream, parapets of pastry and towers of ices. The Abbé Constantin dined heartily, however, and did not flinch before two or three glasses of champagne. He did not dislike good living. Perfection is not of this world; and if gluttony is, as they say, a deadly sin, how many good priests will go to perdition!

The coffee was served on the terrace, in front of the chateau. The sound of the old village clock, striking nine, was heard at a distance. The woods and meadows slept. The outlines of the park grew indistinct and vague. The moon rose slowly above the tops of the tall trees.

Bettina placed a box of cigars on the table.

“Do you smoke?” said she to Jean.

“Yes, mademoiselle.”

“Take one then, Monsieur Jean, there I have said it. Take—but no; listen.”

And speaking in a low tone, as she offered him the cigars :

“It is dark now, you can blush at your ease. I am going to tell you what I would not tell you at the table just now. The old notary at Souvigny, who was your guardian, came to see my sister about the payments for the chateau. He told us what you did after your father’s death, what you did for that poor mother, and that young girl. We were very much touched by it, my sister and I.”

“Yes, monsieur,” continued Mrs. Scott, “and that is the reason we have received you to-day with so much pleasure. We would not have given every one such a welcome, you may rest assured. Now take your cigar. My sister is waiting.”

Jean could not find a word to reply. Bettina was there, in front of him, with the box of cigars in both hands, and her eyes fixed full on Jean’s face. She was enjoying that very genuine, very keen delight which may be expressed in this phrase :

“It seems to me that I am looking at an honest young man.”

“And now,” said Mrs. Scott, “let us sit down and enjoy this lovely night. Take your coffee and smoke.”

“And we will not talk, Suzie, we will not talk.

This grand stillness of the country is adorable after the uproar of Paris. Let us be still, without speaking. Let us look at the sky, and the moon, and the stars."

So all four began to carry out the little programme with great enjoyment. Suzie and Bettina, quiet, resting, absolutely separated from their life of the day before, and already feeling an affection for this country which had just received them and was going to keep them.

Jean was less calm; Miss Percival's words had moved him deeply; his heart had not yet resumed its regular beating.

But, happiest of all, was the Abbé Constantin. He had thoroughly enjoyed the little episode which had put Jean's modesty to such a severe, yet such a pleasant test. The abbé loved his godson so dearly. The tenderest of fathers never loved more fondly his dearest child. When the old curé looked at the young officer, he often said to himself:

"Heaven has blessed me! I am a priest, and yet I have a son!"

The abbé was lost in a very delightful reverie: he found himself at home again, more at home than he ever imagined could again be the case; his ideas gradually became confused and entangled. Reverie became drowsiness, drowsiness became sleep; the

disaster was soon complete, irreparable. The curé was asleep, sound asleep. The extraordinary dinner and the two or three glasses of champagne had, perhaps, something to do with the catastrophe.

Jean had not observed anything. He had forgotten his promise to his godfather. And why had he forgotten it? Because Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival had chosen to put their feet on the footstools in front of their big willow chairs, lined with cushions. Then they leaned back lazily in their chairs, and their muslin skirts were raised a little, a very little, but still sufficiently to disclose four little feet, whose outlines appeared very clear and distinct in the moonlight, under the two pretty billows of white lace. Jean looked at the little feet and asked himself this question :

“Which are the smaller?”

While he was trying to solve the problem, Bettina suddenly said to him in a low tone :

“Monsieur Jean ! Monsieur Jean !”

“Mademoiselle ?”

“Look at Monsieur le Curé, he has gone to sleep.”

“Oh, *mon dieu* ! it is my fault.”

“What ! Your fault ?” asked Mrs. Scott in the same low tone.

“Yes, my godfather rises early in the morning and goes to bed very early ; he charged me not to

let him go to sleep. Very often, after dining with Madame Longueval, he took a nap, and you have given him such a charming welcome that he has gone back to his old habits."

"And he is quite right," said Bettina. "Do not make a noise; we will not waken him."

"You are so kind, mademoiselle, but the evening is growing a little cool."

"Ah! that is true. He may take cold. Wait; I will go and fetch a wrap."

"I think, mademoiselle, that it would be better to try and waken him so adroitly that he will not suspect that you have seen him asleep."

"Leave it to me," said Bettina. "Suzie, let us sing together, very low at first, and then gradually raise our voices. Let us sing."

"Willingly, but what shall we sing?"

"*Something childish.* The words are of no consequence."

Suzie and Bettina began to sing:

"If I had but two little wings
And were a little feathery bird," etc.

Their voices fell exquisitely sweet and clear on the deep silence.

The abbé heard nothing; he did not stir.

Charmed with the little concert, Jean said to himself :

“It is to be hoped that my godfather will not wake up too soon!”

The voices rose clearer and louder :

“But in my sleep to you I fly;
I’m always with you in my sleep!” etc.

And still the abbé did not yield.

“How he sleeps,” said Suzie; “it is a sin to waken him.”

“But we must! Louder, Suzie, still louder!”

The full harmony of their voices now burst forth unrestrained :

“Sleep stays not though a monarch bids,
So I love to wake ere break of day,” etc.

The curé awoke with a start. After a short moment of alarm he breathed free. Evidently no one had noticed that he had been asleep. Very carefully and slowly he drew himself up straight again. He was saved!

A quarter of an hour afterward the two sisters accompanied the curé and Jean to a little park-gate, which opened into the village, not far from the parsonage. As they approached the gate Bettina suddenly said to Jean :

"Ah! monsieur, for three hours I have had a question to ask you. This morning on our arrival we met on the road a slender young man, with a blond mustache; he was riding a black horse; he bowed to us as we met."

"It is Paul de Lavardens, one of my friends. He has already had the honor of being presented to you—but quite casually. So he has a great desire to be presented again."

"Ah! well! you can bring him some day," said Mrs. Scott.

"Not before the 25th," cried Bettina, "not before! not before! Until then we do not wish to see any one, except you, Monsieur Jean. But you—it is very strange, and I do not know why it is—you are no longer *any one*, for us. The compliment is not very well turned, perhaps; but do not make a mistake, it is a compliment just the same. It is my intention, in saying it, to be exceedingly agreeable to you."

"And so you are, mademoiselle."

"So much more if I could make myself understood. *Au revoir, Monsieur Jean, et à demain.*"

Mrs. Scott and Miss Percival went slowly back to the chateau.

"And, now, Suzie," said Bettina, "scold me, scold me well; I expect it; I deserve it."

"Scold you! For what?"

"I am sure you are going to say that I was too free with that young man."

"No, I shall not tell you so. That young man has impressed me very favorably, from the first. He inspires me with perfect confidence."

"And me, too."

"I am convinced that it will be well for us both to make him our friend."

"With all my heart, so far as I am concerned. And all the more, Suzie, that I have seen so many young men since we came to France; oh, yes, I have seen so many; and this is the first, positively the first, in whose eyes I have not clearly read this sentence: '*Mon Dieu!* How glad I would be to marry the millions of this little person!' It was distinctly written in the eyes of all the others, but not in his eyes. And now let us go in. Good-night, Suzie."

Mrs. Scott went to see her children, and kiss them in their sleep.

Bettina stood a long time, leaning on her elbow on the balcony.

"It seems to me," she said to herself, "that I am going to like the country."

VII.

THE next morning, on returning from drill, Jean found Paul de Lavardens awaiting him at the barracks. He hardly gave him time to dismount—and as soon as they were alone :

“Tell me,” said he, “tell me quickly, all about your dinner yesterday. I saw them myself in the morning. The little one was driving the four black ponies, at such a rate ! I bowed to them—did you speak of me ? Did they recognize me ? When are you going to take me to Longueval ? Answer, answer me !”

“Answer ! answer ! which question first ?”

“The last one.”

“When will I take you to Longueval ?”

“Yes.”

“In about ten days. They do not care to see any one, just yet.”

“But are you not going to Longueval again before ten days ?”

“Oh ! I, I am going again to-day, at four o’clock. But I do not count. Jean Reynaud, the curé’s god-

son ! That is the way that I have so easily gained the confidence of these two charming women. I am introduced under the patronage and indorsement of the Church—and then, it has been discovered that I can be of service ; I know the country well ; they are going to make me useful, as a guide. In short, I am a nobody ; while you, Count Paul de Lavardens—you are a somebody. So, do not fear, your turn will come with the *fêtes* and balls, when it is necessary to be brilliant, and know how to dance. You will shine then in all your glory, and I shall go back, very humbly, to my obscurity.”

“ You may laugh at me as much as you please. It is none the less true that during these ten days you will get the start—the start ! ”

“ How, the start ? ”

“ Look here, Jean, are you trying to make me believe that you are not already in love with one of these women ? Is it probable ? So much beauty ! so much wealth ! the wealth perhaps, even more than the beauty ! Such luxury as that upsets me, unsettles me ! I dreamed all night of those four black ponies, with their white roses, four cockades—and this little—Bettina—is it not ? ”

“ Yes, Bettina.”

“ Bettina ! Countess Bettina de Lavardens ! Isn’t that rather pretty ? And what a perfect little hus-

band she will have in me! My vocation is, to be the husband of a woman absurdly rich. It is not so easy as you might suppose. You must know how to be rich, and I should have that talent. I have proved it; I have already squandered a good deal of money, and if mamma had not stopped me— But I am all ready to begin again. Ah! how happy she would be with me! I would make her life like that of a fairy princess. In all her luxury she would be conscious of the taste, the art, the skill of her husband. I would spend my life in dressing her, advancing her, in making her famous in the world. I would study her beauty, so that it should have the frame that suited it. ‘If it were not for him,’ she would say to herself, ‘I would not be so pretty.’ I would know, not only how to love her, but how to amuse her. She would have the worth of her money, both in love and in pleasure. Come, Jean, take me to Mrs. Scott’s to-day; it would be a good move.”

“I cannot, I assure you.”

“Oh! well, only ten days more, and then, I warn you, that I shall establish myself there, and I will not budge. In the first place, it will please mamma. She is still a little prejudiced against these Americans; she says that she will manage not to meet them, but I understand her! When I come home

some evening and say to her, ‘Mamma, I have won the heart of a charming little person who is afflicted with a capital of twenty millions, and an income of two or three millions’—they exaggerate when they talk about hundreds of millions—that evening, mamma will be delighted—because what is it that, in her heart, she desires for me? Just what all mothers desire for their sons, especially if their sons have committed follies—either a rich marriage, or a discreet *liaison*. I find both at Longueval—and I can easily adapt myself to either one or the other. Only, be so good as to let me know within ten days which of the two you give up—Mrs. Scott or Miss Percival.”

“You are crazy. I do not think—I never thought——”

“Listen, Jean, you may be virtue and wisdom combined; but, say what you may, and do as you will— Listen—and remember what I tell you. Jean, you will fall in love, in that house.”

“I do not believe it,” cried Jean, laughing.

“I am sure of it. *Au revoir!* I leave you now to your duties.”

Jean was perfectly sincere. He had slept well the night before. His second interview with the two sisters had, as by magic, dispelled the slight inquietude which had disturbed him after the first

meeting. There was too much money in that house for a poor fellow like him to find a place there, honorably.

Friendship was a different thing. He desired with all his heart, and he would try with all his strength, to gain the esteem and regard of these two women. He would try not to see how beautiful Suzie and Bettina were; he would try not to forget himself again as he did the night before in looking at the four little feet on the footstools. They had said to him frankly, cordially, "You will be our friend."

That was all that he desired! To be their friend! And that he would be!

During the following ten days everything conspired for the success of this attempt. Suzie, Bettina, the abbé and Jean lived in the closest and most confidential intimacy. In the morning the two sisters took long drives with the curé, and in the afternoon long rides on horseback with Jean.

Jean no longer tried to analyze his feelings; he no longer asked himself whether he leaned to the right or to the left. He felt the same devotion, the same affection for both of these women. He was perfectly happy, perfectly contented. Then he could not be in love, for love and contentment rarely dwell harmoniously in the same heart.

It was, however, with a little uneasiness and regret that Jean saw the day approach which would bring to Longueval the Turners, the Nortons and the whole tide of the American colony. The day came very quickly.

On Wednesday, the 24th of June, at four o'clock, Jean went to the chateau. Bettina received him quite out of humor.

"Such a disappointment," said she, "my sister is not well. A slight headache—nothing serious. It will be all gone to-morrow, but I dare not go to ride with you all alone. In America I could, but not here, could I?"

"Certainly not," replied Jean.

"So I must send you away, and that makes me so sorry."

"And I, too, am sorry to go, and to lose this last day, which I had hoped to spend with you. However, since it must be! I will come to-morrow to inquire for your sister."

"She will see you herself then; I assure you it is nothing serious. Will you grant me a few minutes' conversation? I have something to say to you. Sit down and listen to me now. My sister and I intended to get you into a corner of the sal^{on} after dinner, and she would have told you what I will now try to say for us both. Only I am a little

nervous—do not laugh. It is very serious. We both want to thank you for having been so kind, so good, so attentive, ever since we arrived.”

“Oh! mademoiselle. I beg of you—it is I——”

“Oh! do not interrupt me. You put me all out. I do not know how to go on. I insist, however, that it is for us to thank you—not you us. We came here, two strangers. We were so fortunate as to find friends, immediately—yes, friends. You took us by the hand. You went with us to see the farmers and the keepers, and your godfather took us to see the poor—and everywhere that we went, they loved you so much, and they immediately began to like us a little on your account. They worship you here, do you know it?”

“I was born here—all these good people have known me from my childhood, and are grateful to me for all that my grandfather and my father did for them. And then, I belong to their race—the race of peasants. My great-grandfather was a farmer at Bargecourt, a village two leagues from here.”

“Oh! oh! you seem to be very proud of it!”

“Neither proud, nor ashamed.”

“I beg pardon. I thought you seemed a little proud! Well, then, I can reply to that, that my mother’s great-grandfather was a farmer in Bre-

tagne. He went to Canada toward the close of the last century, when Canada still belonged to France. And do you like this country very much, where you were born ?”

“ Very much ; but I shall soon, perhaps, be obliged to leave it.”

“ Why ?”

“ When I am promoted I shall be changed into another regiment, and then I must go from post to post. But when I get to be an old, retired general or colonel, I shall certainly come back to live and die here in my father’s little house.”

“ And always alone ?”

“ Why, alone ? Indeed, I hope not.”

“ You mean to marry ?”

“ Yes, certainly.”

“ And you are endeavoring to marry ?”

“ No. One may think about marrying, but one must not seek to marry.”

“ But there are people who do seek to marry, and some of them have wished to marry you.”

“ How do you know that ?”

“ Oh, I know very well all about your little affairs. You are what is called a good match ; and I repeat it, some have wished to marry you.”

“ Who told you so ?”

“ Monsieur le Curé.”

"My godfather did wrong," said Jean, with considerable spirit.

"No, no, he did not do wrong; if any one was to blame it was I, and to blame through kindness and not from curiosity, I assure you. I discovered that your godfather was never so happy as when he was speaking of you. During our walks in the morning, when alone with him, in order to please him, I mention you, and he tells me all about your life. You are rich—you are quite rich. You receive two hundred and thirteen francs and some centimes a month from the Government. Isn't that so?"

"Yes," replied Jean, deciding to take his share of the curé's indiscretions with a good grace.

"You have an income of eight thousand francs."

"Almost, not quite."

"Added to that, your house, which is worth about thirty thousand francs. In short, you are in excellent circumstances, and already your hand has been asked for."

"My hand asked for? No! no!"

"Yes, indeed! Yes, indeed! Twice—and you have refused two very fine marriages—two very fine *dots*—if you prefer. It is all the same thing to so many people. Two hundred thousand francs on one side, three hundred thousand on the other. That is considered an immense sum here, and you have re-

fused it. Tell me why? If you only knew how curious I am to know!"

"Ah, well! It was in relation to two very charming young girls——"

"That is understood; they always say that."

"But whom I hardly knew. I was compelled—for I resisted—I was compelled to spend two or three evenings with them last winter."

"And then?"

"Then—I do not know very well how to explain to you. I had only a feeling of embarrassment, of uneasiness, of dullness, of weariness——"

"In short," said Bettina boldly, "not the slightest suspicion of love."

"No, not the least; and I very wisely went back to my bachelor quarters, for I think it is better not to marry at all than to marry without love. That is my opinion."

"And it is mine, also."

She looked at him. He looked at her. And all at once, to the great surprise of both, they found nothing more to say—nothing at all.

Fortunately at this moment Harry and Bella came rushing into the *salôn* with cries of delight.

"Monsieur Jean! Monsieur Jean! Are you there, Monsieur Jean? Come and see our ponies."

"Ah!" said Bettina, her voice a little unsteady.

“Edwards has just returned from Paris, and has brought some mites of ponies for the children. Let us go and see them?”

They went out to see the ponies, which were indeed worthy of figuring in the stables of the king of Lilliput.

VIII.

THREE weeks have passed. Jean is to leave with his regiment the next day for the camp of Cercottes in the forest d'Orleans; they will be ten days on the march in going and coming and ten days in camp. The regiment is to return to Souvigny on the 10th of August.

Jean is no longer calm; Jean is no longer happy. He sees the moment of departure come with impatience and at the same time with dread. With impatience, for he is suffering martyrdom; he is in haste to escape it. With dread, for during these twenty days what will become of him without seeing her, without speaking to her—in short, without her? Her, that is Bettina! He loves her!

Since when? Since the first day, since that meeting in the curé's garden in the month of May! That was the truth! But Jean struggled and argued with himself against this truth. He thought he had loved Bettina only since that day when they two had such a pleasant friendly talk in the little *salôn*. She was sitting on the blue divan near the window,

and while she chatted she amused herself in smoothing out the rumpled toilette of a Japanese princess, one of Bella's dolls, which was lying on a chair, and which Bettina had picked up mechanically.

How did Miss Percival happen to speak to him of those two young girls whom he might have married? And yet, the question did not displease him. He had replied that if he did not then feel any inclination to marry, it was because the interviews with these young girls had caused him no emotion, no agitation. He had smiled as he said this; but in a few minutes afterward he smiled no longer. He had suddenly learned the meaning of these emotions and agitations. Jean did not deceive himself; he was fully aware of the extent of his wound—it had struck at his heart.

Jean, however, did not despair. That very day as he went away he said to himself: "Yes, it is severe, very severe, but I shall recover from it." He sought an excuse for his madness, and he found it in circumstances. This lovely girl had been with him too much during the last ten days, too much alone with him! How could he resist such a temptation? He was fascinated with her charms, her grace, her beauty. But the next day, twenty people were expected at the chateau, and that would be the end of this dangerous intimacy. He would have the cour-

age to stay away, to lose himself in the crowd ; he would not see Bettina so often and so informally. Not to see her at all, that he could not think of ! He would be Bettina's friend, since he must be only her friend. For any other thought never even entered Jean's mind ; that thought would not only have seemed preposterous to him, it would have been monstrous. There was not a more honorable man than Jean in the world ; and Bettina's money was a horror to him, a positive horror.

A crowd of people did indeed invade Longueval on the 25th of June. Mrs. Norton came with her son Daniel, and Mrs. Turner with her son Philip. Young Daniel and young Philip were both of them members of the famous brotherhood of Thirty-Four. They were old friends ; Bettina had treated them as such, and had told them frankly that they were absolutely wasting their time ; they were not discouraged, however, and formed the center of a very anxious, assiduous court which surrounded Bettina.

Paul de Lavardens had made his appearance on the scene, and had rapidly become a favorite with every one. He had received the brilliant and comprehensive education of a young man who devotes himself to pleasure. Was it a question, what they should do to amuse themselves ? Riding, croquet, lawn-tennis, polo, dancing, charades and theatricals,

he was ready for all, he excelled in all. His superiority was startling, impressive. By general consent, Paul became the organizer and leader of all the *fêtes* at Longueval.

Bettina was not deceived for a moment; Jean presented Paul de Lavardens to her, and he had hardly gone through the necessary formalities before Bettina, leaning over to Suzie, whispered in her ear:

“The thirty-fifth!”

However, she accorded Paul a gracious welcome, so gracious that for several days he was foolish enough to misinterpret it. He thought that his own personal attractions had won for him such a pleasant, cordial reception. It was a great mistake. He had been presented by Jean; he was Jean’s friend; in Bettina’s eyes all his merit lay in that.

Mrs. Scott’s chateau was open house; her invitations were not for one evening, but for every evening, and Paul eagerly accepted every evening. His dream was realized. He had found Paris again at Longueval!

But Paul was neither a fool nor a coxcomb. Without doubt, Miss Percival made him the object of particular attention and favors. She was pleased to have long, very long, conversations with him, all alone. But what was the continual, the inexhaustible subject of these conversations? Jean, Jean,

always Jean! and Paul was flippant, giddy and frivolous, but he became serious as soon as Jean was mentioned; he knew how to appreciate him, how to love him.

Nothing was easier for him, nothing was sweeter to him than to praise the friend of his boyhood. And as he saw that Bettina listened to him with pleasure, Paul gave free rein to his eloquence.

But Paul—and it was his privilege—desired one evening to have the benefit of his chivalrous conduct. He had been talking with Bettina for a quarter of an hour; the conversation ended, he went to find Jean at the other end of the *salôn*, and said to him:

“You left the field free to me, and I have thrown myself boldly at Miss Percival.”

“Well! you have no reason to be dissatisfied with the result of your undertaking. You seem to be the best friends in the world.”

“Yes, certainly we are friends. I can go that far, but no further. Nothing can be more agreeable, more charming than Miss Percival; but, at least, I deserve some credit for acknowledging it—for between us, she makes me play a distasteful and ridiculous rôle, a rôle which does not belong to one of my age. At my age one is a lover, not a *confidant*.”

“ A confidant ?”

“ Yes, my dear fellow, a confidant ! That is the position they have given me in this house ! You saw us just now ; well, do you know what we were talking about ? Of you, my dear fellow, nothing but you ! and it is the same every evening. There is no end to the questions : You were brought up together ? You both studied with the Abbé Constantin ? He would soon be a captain ? And after that ?—commandant ?—and after that ?—colonel, *et cetera . . . et cetera . . .* Ah ! Jean, my friend Jean. What a beautiful dream you might have, if you only would.”

Jean was angry, almost in a passion. Paul was very much astonished at this sudden burst of anger.

“ What is the matter with you ? It seems to me that I have said nothing !”

“ I beg your pardon. I was wrong ; but how could such an absurd idea enter your head ?”

“ Absurd ? I do not think it absurd. I have had the same idea myself.”

“ Ah ! You——”

“ Why ‘ ah ! me ?’ If I have had it, you can have it ; you are better than I.”

“ Paul, I beg of you !”

Jean’s distress was evident.

“ We will say no more about it ; what I want to

say, in brief, is that Miss Percival finds me agreeable, very agreeable ; but as for thinking seriously of me, such an idea never entered her head. Now I am going to turn my attention to Mrs. Scott, without much confidence, however. Look here, Jean, I may amuse myself in this house ; but I shall never make my fortune here."

Paul now devoted himself to Mrs. Scott ; but the very next day he was surprised to encounter Jean, who began to take a place very regularly in Mrs. Scott's special circle—for she, like Bettina, had her own little court. Jean tried to find there protection and a place of safety.

The day of their memorable conversation about marriages without love, Bettina for the first time had felt suddenly awoken in her that need of love, which sleeps, but not very profoundly, in the hearts of all young girls. The same sensation had come at the same moment in the soul of Jean and in the soul of Bettina. He, alarmed, thrust it rudely away from him. She, on the contrary, gave herself up, in all the freshness of her perfect innocence, to this new tenderness and emotion.

She was waiting for love, what if this were love ! What if the man who could be her thought, her life, her soul, should be he, Jean ! Why, not ? She knew him better than all those who for a year past had

fluttered around her fortune, and in all that she knew of him there was nothing to discourage the confidence and love of a pure young girl.

Both, in fact, were right; both were influenced by duty, and by truth: she, in yielding; he, in resisting. She, in not thinking for a moment of Jean's obscurity and poverty; he, in recoiling from this mountain of millions as he would have recoiled from a crime. She, in thinking that she had no right to parley with love; he, in thinking that he had no right to parley with honor.

For these reasons, Bettina grew more tender and surrendered herself more completely to love's first appeal; while Jean became more gloomy and troubled from day to day. He was not only afraid of loving, he was afraid of being loved.

He should have stayed away; he had tried, but he could not. The temptation was too strong. He continued his visits; and she would come to meet him with extended hands, a smile upon her lips, and her heart in her eyes. Everything about her said: "Let us try to love each other, and if we can, let us love!"

Fear seized him. He hardly dared touch these hands which were stretched out to meet his. He tried to avoid those tender, smiling, questioning glances which sought his own. He trembled at the

necessity of talking with Bettina, of listening to her. It was then that Jean took refuge near Mrs. Scott; and it was then that Mrs. Scott listened to those hesitating, troubled words which were not addressed to her, but which, however, she took to herself.

As yet, there was nothing to prevent Suzie's mistake. Bettina had not spoken to her of these vague emotions which filled her soul. She guarded and caressed the secret of her dawning love, as a miser guards and caresses his first accumulations. The day when she could see clearly into her own heart, the day when she could be sure that she loved; ah! how she would talk on that day, and how happy she would be in telling Suzie all.

Mrs. Scott had ended by attributing to herself the honor of Jean's melancholy, which day by day became more marked. She was flattered by it—it never displeases a woman to think herself beloved—but she was grieved at the same time. She had a great esteem and regard for Jean; it pained her to think that he was sad and unhappy on her account.

Suzie, besides, had the consciousness of innocence. Sometimes she was, with others, a coquette. It was no great sin to torment them a little. These others had nothing to do, they were good for nothing else; it occupied, while it amused them; it helped them

pass the time, and her, too. But Suzie could not reproach herself with having been coquettish with Jean. She was conscious of his merit and of his superiority ; he was different from the rest ; he was a man to suffer seriously, and that Mrs. Scott did not desire. Two or three times she had been on the point of speaking to him, very gently and affectionately, but she had reflected that Jean was going away for a number of days ; on his return, if it was necessary, she would convince him by her manner that love must not come to interfere with their friendship.

Jean was going the next day. Bettina had insisted that he should spend this last day at Longueval, and dine at the chateau. Jean had refused, alleging the preparations he must make before his departure. He came on foot about half-past ten in the evening. Several times on the way he had almost determined to go back.

"If I had the courage," he said to himself, "I would not see her again. I leave to-morrow, and I will not return to Souvigny while she is here. My resolution is firmly fixed."

But he went on ; he wanted to see her again for the last time.

As soon as he had entered the *salôn* Bettina came running to meet him ;

"You are come at last! How late you are!"

"I have been very busy."

"And you are going to-morrow?"

"Yes, to-morrow."

"Early?"

"At five o'clock."

"Shall you take the road past the park and through the village?"

"Yes, that is just the route we are to take."

"Why do you go so early in the morning? I would have gone to the top of the terrace to see you pass and bid you adieu."

Bettina had taken Jean's burning hand and kept it in hers. He drew it away sadly.

"I must go," said he, "and speak to your sister."

"Presently! she has not seen you—there are a dozen persons round her. Come, sit here a little while with me."

He was obliged to sit down at her side.

"We, too, are going away," she said.

"You?"

"Yes; we received a dispatch an hour ago from my brother-in-law, which gave us great delight. He did not expect to return for a month; he will be here in twelve days; he will sail from New York on the Labrador day after to-morrow. We shall go to meet him at Havre. We will take the children

and start day after to-morrow. It will do them good to be at the seashore a few days. How glad my brother-in-law will be to know you. But he knows you already, for we have spoken of you in all our letters. I am sure that you will like each other. He is so good. How long shall you be gone?"

"Twenty days."

"Twenty days, in a camp."

"Yes, mademoiselle, the camp of Cercottes."

"In the forest d'Orleans, I found that out from your godfather this morning. I am very glad to go to meet my brother-in-law, but at the same time I am sorry to be away from here; only for that I should have paid a visit to your godfather every morning. He would have given me news of you. Will you, in a few days write my sister a little bit of a letter, if it is only four lines—that will not take you long—just to tell her how you are, and that you have not forgotten us?"

"Oh! I can never forget you, your kindness, your goodness, never! mademoiselle, never!"

His voice trembled. He was afraid of betraying his emotion. He rose:

"Mademoiselle, I must go and speak to your sister. She sees me, she will think it strange."

He crossed the salôn. Bettina looked after him.

Mrs. Norton had just seated herself at the piano to play a waltz for the young people. Paul de Lavardens came up to Miss Percival :

“Will you do me the honor, mademoiselle ?”

“Thank you. I believe I have just promised Monsieur Jean,” replied she.

“But if you have not promised him, you will dance with me.”

“Oh ! yes.”

Bettina went across the room to Jean, who had just sat down by Mrs. Scott.

“I have told a story ;” said she to him. “M. de Lavardens asked me for this waltz, and I told him I had promised you. You will say yes, will you not ? You do not object.”

To hold her in his arms, to breathe the perfume of her hair ! Jean’s strength deserted him. He dared not accept.

“I am very sorry, mademoiselle. I cannot—I am ill this evening. I came only to make my adieu before my departure—but it would be impossible for me to dance.”

Mrs. Norton struck up the prelude to the waltz.

“Well ! mademoiselle,” said Paul coming up gayly, “is it his waltz or mine ?”

“Yours,” said she sadly, still looking at Jean.

She was so troubled that she answered without

really knowing what she said. She immediately regretted that she had accepted. She would rather have stayed there near him. But it was too late. Paul took her hand and led her away. Jean rose, and looked after Bettina and Paul; a cloud passed before his eyes; he suffered cruelly.

"The only thing for me to do," said he to himself, "is to take advantage of this waltz and go away. To-morrow morning I will write a few lines to Mrs. Scott and make my excuses."

He reached the door. He did not look at Bettina again. If he had he would have stayed. But Bettina saw him, and suddenly said to Paul:

"Thank you very much, monsieur, but I am a little tired. Let us stop, if you please. Excuse me."

Paul offered her his arm.

"No, thank you," said she.

The door had just closed. Jean had gone. Bettina hastily crossed the sal^{on}, leaving Paul standing alone, very much astonished and at a loss to understand what was passing.

Jean was already on the porch, when he heard some one call:

"Monsieur Jean! Monsieur Jean!"

He stopped and turned around. She was there at his side,

"You are going away, without saying good-by to me?"

"Pardon me, I am very tired."

"Then you must not walk home. It looks like a storm."

She held out her hand.

"Why, it is raining now!"

"Oh, only a little."

"Come and take a cup of tea with me in the little sal^{on}, and I will send you home in a carriage."

And turning to one of the footmen :

"Tell them to have a coupé ready immediately."

"No, mademoiselle, I beg of you. The fresh air is good for me. I shall feel better if I walk. Let me go."

"Very well, then. But you have no overcoat. You must take one."

"I shall not feel the cold; but you, in that thin dress. I must go, so that you will go in."

Without even taking her hand he escaped and ran rapidly down the steps.

"If I touch her hand," said he to himself, "I am lost. My secret will escape me."

His secret! He did not know that Bettina read his heart like an open book.

When Jean reached the bottom of the steps he hesitated for an instant. These words were on his lips:

"I love you! I adore you! And that is why I must see you no more!"

But he must not utter them, he must fly; and in a few moments he was lost in the darkness.

Bettina stood there on the door steps, framed in the light which streamed through the open door. Big drops of rain, driven by the wind, fell on her bare shoulders, and made her shiver; but she did not heed them; she only heard the beating of her heart.

"I knew very well that he loved me," she said to herself, "but now I am very sure that I too—oh! yes, I too——"

Turning suddenly, the reflection, in one of the large mirrors in the hall, of the two tall footmen standing motionless near the oaken table, recalled her to herself. Bettina took a few steps in the direction of the *salôn*, she heard the laughter and the waltz still going on. She stopped. She wanted to be alone, all alone, and turning to one of the servants:

"Go," said she, "and tell madame that I am very much fatigued; I am going to my room."

Annie, her maid, was sleeping in an armchair. She sent her away. She threw herself down upon the sofa. A sweet sadness oppressed her.

The door opened, and Mrs. Scott entered.

"Are you ill, Bettina?"

"Ah! Suzie, it is you, my Suzie! How glad I am that you have come! Sit down by me, close to me." She threw herself into her sister's arms, like a child, pressing her burning cheeks to Suzie's cool shoulder, then suddenly she burst into a flood of tears.

"Bettina! my darling, what is the matter?"

"Nothing, nothing, I am nervous; it is for joy."

"For joy?"

"Yes, yes, wait; but let me cry a little, it will do me good! Do not be frightened!"

Suzie's kisses calmed and soothed her.

"It is over now, and I am going to tell you. I want to talk to you about Jean."

"Jean! Do you call him Jean?"

"Yes, I call him Jean. Have you not noticed how sad and depressed he has been for some time?"

"Yes, I have indeed."

"He would come, and he would go immediately to you, and stay there absorbed; and to such a point, silent, that for several days I asked myself—forgive me for speaking so plainly—if he were not in love with you, my Suzie. You are so charming, it would not have been strange! But no; it was not you, it was me!"

"You?"

"Yes, me! Let me tell you! He hardly dared

look at me. He avoided me, he fled from me. He was afraid of me—actually afraid—and now, to do me justice, I am not frightful. Am I?”

“Certainly not.”

“Ah! he was not afraid of me, it was my frightful money! My money which attracts all the rest, and is so tempting to them, my money frightens him and drives him to despair, because he is not like the rest—because he——”

“Take care, my darling, perhaps you are mistaken.”

“Oh! no, I am not mistaken. Just now, on the steps, as he was going away, he said a few words to me. The words were nothing, but if you had seen his distress, in spite of his efforts to conceal it! Suzie, darling Suzie, by my love for you—and God knows how great a love it is—I am convinced that if I had been a poor little girl, without any money, instead of being Miss Percival, Jean would have taken my hand just now, and have told me that he loved me; and if he had told me so, do you know what I would have answered him?”

“That you loved him, too.”

“Yes, and that is why I am so happy. It is my firm resolve to marry for love. I do not say that I worship Jean, not yet; but I am just commencing to, Suzie, and the beginning is so sweet.”

“Bettina, it frightens me to see you in such a state of exaltation. I do not doubt that Monsieur Reynaud has a great regard for you.”

“Oh ! more than that—more than that.”

“Love, then, if you will. Yes, you are right, you are not mistaken. He loves you ; and are you not worthy, my darling, of all the love that any one can give for you ? As for Jean—you see how easy it is for me also to call him Jean—you know what I think of him ; very often, during the last month, we have had occasion to say to each other—‘I esteem him highly, very highly.’ But, in spite of that, is he a suitable husband for you ?”

“Yes, if I love him.”

“I try to reason with you, and you interrupt me. Bettina, I have an experience which you cannot have ; do not misunderstand me. Ever since our arrival in Paris we have been thrown into very gay, brilliant, aristocratic society. Already, if you had been willing, you might have been a marchioness or a princess.”

“Yes, but I was not willing.”

“Then you are contented to be only Madame Reynaud ?”

“Perfectly, if I love him.”

“Ah, you always come back to that.”

“Because that is the only question. There is no

other, and I want to be reasonable. I confess that this question is not quite decided, and that perhaps I am a little hasty. Now, see how sensible I can be. Jean is going away to-morrow. I shall not see him again for three weeks. I will have all that time to question myself, to deliberate, to find out the real state of my feelings. Beneath all my flighty ways I am serious and thoughtful; you will acknowledge that?"

"Yes, I acknowledge it."

"Well, then! I ask you this, as I would ask our mother, if she were here. If at the end of these three weeks, I say to you: 'Suzie, I am sure that I love him!' will you let me go to him, all by myself, and ask him if he will have me for his wife? That is what you did with Richard."

"Yes, I will let you."

Bettina kissed her sister tenderly, and murmured in her ear these words:

"Thank you, mamma."

"Mamma! mamma! that is what you called me when you were a child, when we two were alone in the world, when I undressed you at night, in our poor little room, in New York, when I held you in my arms, when I put you in your little bed, and sang you to sleep. And since then, Bettina, I have had only one wish in the world—your happiness. That

is why I ask you to reflect well. Do not answer me. Do not talk any more about it. I want to leave you quiet and calm. You have sent Annie away. Would you like me to be your little mamma again, to-night, and undress you and put you to bed as I used to do?"

"Oh, yes, I would like it so much."

"And will you promise me to be wise, when you have gone to bed?"

"As wise as an image."

"And you will do your best to go to sleep?"

"All that I can."

"Without thinking of anything?"

"Without thinking of anything."

"Very well, then!"

A few minutes later Bettina's pretty head was gently resting amid embroideries and laces. Suzie said to her sister:

"I must go back to all these people who weary me so to-night. Before I go to my own room I will come and see if you are asleep. Do not talk any more. Go to sleep now."

She went out. Bettina was alone. She tried to keep her promise and go to sleep, but she only half succeeded. She fell into a light slumber, into an unconscious state, just between dreaming and waking. She had promised not to think of anything,

and yet she was thinking of him, only of him; but vaguely, indistinctly. She could not have told how long a time had passed, when suddenly it seemed to her there was some one in the room; she half opened her eyes, and recognized her sister. In sleepy tones she said to her :

“You know, I love him.”

“Hush—go to sleep!”

“I am going to sleep.”

Then she fell into a deeper sleep; lighter, however, than usual—for about four o’clock in the morning she was awakened by a noise, which at any other time would not have disturbed her slumbers. The rain was falling in torrents, and beat against the windows in Bettina’s room.

“Oh! It rains,” she said to herself; “he will get wet!”

This was her first thought. She rose, and crossing the room, in her bare feet, threw open the shutter. The day dawned dark, stormy, and dismal; the sky was overcast with heavy clouds; the wind blew fiercely, driving the rain in sudden gusts.

Bettina did not lie down again; she knew that it would be impossible for her to sleep. She put on a wrapper and stood by the window, watching the falling rain. Since he must really go, she wished he might have had pleasant weather and bright sun-

shine for his first day's march. Eight or ten leagues in this driving rain! Poor Jean! Bettina thought of little Turner, and little Norton, and Paul de Lavardens, who would sleep quietly until ten o'clock while Jean would be exposed to all this storm.

Paul de Lavardens! that name brought up a painful memory, that waltz, the evening before. To have danced when Jean's unhappiness was so evident! In Bettina's eyes this waltz assumed the proportions of a crime; what she had done was horrible! And afterward, had she not failed in courage and frankness in that last interview with Jean? He could not, dared not, say anything; but she might have shown more tenderness, more *abandon*. Sad and suffering as he was, she never should have let him walk home. She ought to have kept him, to have kept him at any price. Jean must have gone away with the impression that she was a cruel, heartless girl.

And in half an hour he was going away for three weeks. Ah! if she only could in any way! But there is a way. The regiment will pass by the park wall, below the terrace. Bettina is seized with a mad desire to see Jean go by. He will understand when he sees her there, at such an hour, that she has come to ask his forgiveness for her unkindness the evening before. Yes, she will go. But she has

promised Suzie to be as wise as an image ; and is it so, to do what she is about to do ? She will confess all to Suzie when she comes back, and Suzie will forgive her.

She will go ! she will go ! Only, what can she wear ? She has only her ball dress, a muslin wrapper, and pair of blue satin slippers. She would not dare to waken her maid ; and yet the time is so short, a quarter to five ! At five the regiment starts.

She must make her toilette with the muslin wrapper, and the satin slippers ; she will find a hat, her little sandals, and the big Scotch cloak which she wears on rainy days in the hall. She opens her door with the greatest precaution ; everything is still in the chateau ; she steals through the halls and down the stairway.

If only the sandals are there, in their place ! That is her great anxiety. They are there ; and she puts them on over her satin slippers, and wraps the big cloak around her. She can hear the storm outside growing more violent. She discovers one of the immense umbrellas which the footmen use when they are on the box ; she seizes one, she is ready, but when she tries to go out she finds that the doors are fastened with a heavy iron bolt. She tries to move it, but it remains firm, and the big hall

clock slowly strikes five. It is the moment of his departure!

She must see him! She must see him! She makes a great effort. The bolt yields and slips back in its groove, giving Bettina's hand a little gash which makes it bleed; she wraps her handkerchief around it, takes her big umbrella, turns the key in the lock, and opens the door. At last! she is out of doors!

The storm is frightful. The wind and rain are raging. It will take five or six minutes to reach the terrace where she can see the road. She rushes bravely on, under the shelter of her big umbrella. She has gone but a short distance when a sudden, furious gust of storm bursts upon Bettina, tears off her cloak, turns her umbrella inside out, and almost carries her off her feet. There is nothing left. The disaster is complete. Bettina has lost one of her little sandals. They were not sandals for real service, but only dainty little sandals for fine weather.

Just at the moment when Bettina in despair is struggling against the tempest, her blue satin slippers sinking into the wet gravel, the wind brings her the distant echo of the sound of trumpets. The regiment is starting. Bettina summons all her courage; she drops the umbrella, fastens on her

sandal as well as she can, and rushes on again in the pouring rain.

At last she reaches the wood; the trees protect her a little. Another sound of trumpets—this time nearer. Bettina thinks she hears the rumbling of the wheels. She makes her last effort, and reaches the terrace. She is in time! She sees the trumpeters' white horses, and through the mist the long, curved files of guns and wagons. She takes shelter under one of the old lindens which border the terrace. She watches, she waits. He is there, in all that crowd of horsemen. Will she be able to recognize him? Will he by chance turn his head this way?

Bettina knows that he is lieutenant in the second battery of his regiment; she knows that a battery is composed of six guns and six wagons. The Abbé Constantin has told her so. The first battery must pass, then—that is, six guns and six wagons—and then he will come.

He comes, wrapped in his big coat, and it is he who first sees her and recognizes her. He has just been thinking of a long walk he had with her on this terrace one evening in the twilight. He raises his eyes, and there, in that very place, he sees her again! He bares his head in all the rain and bows to her, turning around on his horse as he goes farther away, and looking back as long as he can see her.

He says again to himself, as he had said the night before:

“It is the last time!”

With both her hands she waves him her adieux, and this motion, many times repeated, brings her hands so near, so very near her lips that one might almost think——

“Ah!” she says to herself, “if after this he does not know I love him and forgive me my money——”

IX.

It is the 10th of August, the day which is to bring Jean back to Longueval.

Bettina awoke very early in the morning, and rising, runs immediately to the window. The bright sunshine has already dispelled the mists of the morning. On the evening before, the sky was threatening and heavy with clouds. Bettina has slept but little, and all through the night she kept saying to herself :

“ If only it will not rain to-morrow ! ”

It was going to be a beautiful day. Bettina is a little superstitious. She takes new hope, new courage.

The day begins well ; it will end well.

Mr. Scott returned several days before. Bettina was waiting on the wharf at Havre with Suzie and the children.

After embracing them all tenderly Richard, turning to his sister-in-law, said, laughing :

“ Well, when is the marriage to be ? ”

“ What marriage ? ”

"With M. Jean Reynaud."

"Oh, my sister has written you?"

"Suzie? Not at all. Suzie has not told me a word. It is you, Bettina, who have written me. This young officer has been the only subject of all your letters for the last two months."

"Of all my letters?"

"Yes, and you have written me more frequently and more at length than usual. I do not complain of it, but only ask you when you will present my brother-in-law to me."

He jested in saying this, but Bettina replied:

"Very soon, I hope."

Mr. Scott found that it was a serious matter. As they went back on the train Bettina asked Richard for her letters to him. She read them over again. He was indeed the subject of these letters. There she found their first meeting related in minutest detail. Here was the description of Jean in the parsonage garden, with his straw hat and his bowl of salad, and here again Monsieur Jean, and everywhere Monsieur Jean. She discovered that she had loved him much longer than she thought.

And now it is the 10th of August. Breakfast is just over at the chateau. Harry and Bella are impatient. They know that in an hour or two the regiment will come through the village. They have

been promised to be taken to see the soldiers pass by, and for them as well as for Bettina the return of the Ninth Artillery is a great event.

"Aunt Betty," said Bella, "Aunt Betty, come with us."

"Yes, come," said Harry, "come; we will see our friend Jean on his big gray horse."

Bettina is firm, she refuses; and yet, what a temptation!

But no, she will not go; she will not see Jean until the evening, when she can have the decisive explanation for which she has prepared herself during these three weeks.

The children start off with their governesses. Bettina, Suzie and Richard go into the park near the chateau, and as soon as they are seated:

"Suzie," says Bettina, "I am going to remind you of your promise to-day. You remember what passed between us the night of our departure. It was agreed that, if on the day of his return, I should say to you: 'Suzie, I am sure that I love him!' that you would let me tell him so frankly, and ask him if he would have me for his wife."

"Yes, I promised you that. But are you very sure?"

"Perfectly sure. I warn you, then, that I intend to bring him here, to this very seat," added she,

smiling, "and tell him in almost the same words what you once told Richard ; that brought you good fortune, Suzie, you are perfectly happy. And I, I want to be happy too ! Richard, Suzie has spoken to you of Monsieur Reynaud."

"Yes, and she has told me that there is no man she esteems more highly ; but——"

"But she has also told you that it was, perhaps, a little too obscure, a little too plebeian a marriage for me. Oh ! naughty sister ! Would you believe, Richard, that I cannot rid her of this fear. She does not understand that I desire above all things to love and to be loved. Would you believe, Richard, that she set a horrible snare for me last week ! You know there is, in society, a Prince Romanelli ?"

"Yes, you might have been a princess."

"That would not have been very difficult, I fancy. Well ! one day I was so imprudent as to say to Suzie that, as a last resort, the Prince Romanelli might be acceptable to me. Can you imagine what she did ? The Turners were at Trouville. She arranged a little plot, they made me breakfast with the prince, but the result was most disastrous. Acceptable ! the two hours that I spent with him I spent in asking myself how I could ever have said such a thing. No, Richard ; no, Suzie ; I will be neither princess, nor countess, nor marchioness. I will be Madame

Jean Reynaud, if Monsieur Jean Reynaud does not object; and that is by no means certain."

The regiment was entering the village, and suddenly a gladsome, stirring flourish of trumpets was heard in the distance. All three stopped, silent. It was the regiment. It was Jean who was passing by. The sounds grew fainter and died away, and Bettina resumed :

"No, it is not certain. He loves me, however, and very much, but without really knowing what I am. I think that I deserve to be loved differently : I think that he would not be so afraid of me if he knew me better—and for that reason I ask permission to speak to him to-night, freely and openly."

"We consent," replied Richard, "we both consent. We know, Bettina, that you will never do anything that is not noble and generous."

"I will try, at least."

The children came running back. They had seen Jean ; he was all white with dust ; he had said good morning to them.

"Only," added Bella, "he was not nice ; he did not stop to speak to us ; he always did, but this morning he seemed not to want to."

"Yes, he wanted to," replied Harry, "for at first he did stop, and then he changed his mind and went on."

“ Well, he did not, anyway ; and it is delightful to talk with an officer, especially when he is on horseback ! ”

“ It is not only that, but because we like Monsieur Jean so very much. If you knew, papa, how good he is and how he plays with us ! ”

“ And what nice pictures he makes ! Harry, do you remember the big punchinello, with his stick, that was so comical ? ”

“ And the cat, there was a cat too, just like our Guignol.”

The two children ran off, talking about their friend Jean.

“ Decidedly,” said Mr. Scott, “ everybody in the house likes him.”

“ And you will be like everybody else, when you know him,” replied Bettina.

The regiment trotted through the village out into the open highway. Here is the terrace where he discovered Bettina the other morning. Jean says to himself : “ If she should be there ! ” He both fears and hopes. He lifts his head, he looks, she is not there !

He has not seen her again ! He will not see her again, at least for a long time. He will go to Paris this very evening at six o'clock. One of the attachés of the minister of war takes an interest in him. He will try to be exchanged into another regiment !

Jean has reflected seriously while he was alone at Cercottes, and this was the result of his reflections : he cannot, he must not be Bettina's husband !

The men dismount in the courtyard, at the barracks. Jean takes leave of his colonel and his comrades. All is over. He is free, he can go away. He does not go, however. He looks around him. How happy he was three weeks ago as he rode out of this same courtyard, amid the rattling of the cannon over the pavement of Souvigny ! How sadly he will go out of it to-day ! Then, his life was here ; where will it be now ?

He enters, and goes to his apartment. He writes to Mrs. Scott ; he tells her that he is obliged to start at once for Paris ; that he cannot dine at the chateau ; he begs Madame Scott to remember him to Mademoiselle Bettina. Bettina ! Ah ! How hard it was for him to write that name ! He seals his letter. He sends it off immediately.

He makes his preparations for departure, then he will go to take leave of his godfather. That will be the hardest. He will only speak to him of a short absence.

He opens one of his bureau drawers to take out some money. The first thing that meets his eyes is a blue-tinted letter. It is the only note he ever received from her :

"Will you be so kind as to send, by the bearer, the book of which you spoke to me last evening? Perhaps it will be a little deep for me. I would like, however, to try to read it, *a tout á l'heure*. Come as soon as possible."

It was signed "*Bettina*."

Jean reads these few lines over and over again. But very soon he can no longer read them, his eyes are dim.

"That is all that will remain to me of her!" he says to himself.

At this same hour the Abbé Constantin is *tête-à-tête* with Pauline. They were making up their accounts. The financial situation is admirable. More than two thousand francs on hand! And the desires of Suzie and Bettina are realized. There are no longer any poor in the district. Old Pauline has sometimes even slight scruples of conscience.

"Do you see, Monsieur le Curé," says she, "that perhaps we are giving a little too much. It will soon be reported in the neighboring communes that charity here has an open hand. And do you know what will happen one of these days? They will come to Longueval to be poor."

The curé gives Pauline fifty francs; she goes out to take them to a poor man, who has broken his arm in falling from a load of hay.

The Abbé Constantin is alone in the parsonage. He is troubled. He watched for the arrival of the regiment; but Jean stopped only for a moment; he looked sad. For some time the abbé has noticed that Jean no longer is in his accustomed good spirits. But the curé was not uneasy, believing it to be merely one of those little youthful vexations which do not concern a poor simple-hearted old priest. But to-day Jean's pre-occupation was very evident.

"I will come to you presently, godfather," he had said to the curé, "I want to talk with you."

He had left him abruptly. The Abbé Constantin had not had time to give Loulou his lump of sugar, or rather his lumps of sugar—for he had put five or six in his pocket—considering that Loulou had well deserved such a treat, after his ten days' march. Besides, since Mrs. Scott came to the chateau, Loulou very often had several lumps of sugar. The Abbé Constantin had become a spendthrift, a prodigal; he felt like a millionaire; Loulou's sugar was one of his follies. One day he even came very near addressing to Loulou his same little stereotyped speech:

"This comes from the new owners of Longueval. Pray for them to-night."

It was three o'clock when Jean arrived at the parsonage, and the curé immediately began:

"You told me that you wanted to talk with me. What is it about?"

"About something, godfather, which will surprise you, and grieve you; and which grieves me, too. I come to bid you farewell."

"Farewell! You are going away?"

"Yes, I am going away."

"When?"

"This very day, in two hours."

"In two hours! But we are to dine at the chateau this evening."

"I have just written to Mrs. Scott to excuse me. I am absolutely obliged to go."

"Immediately?"

"Immediately."

"And you are going?"

"To Paris."

"To Paris! Why this sudden determination?"

"Not so sudden. I have thought about it for a long time."

"And you have said nothing about it to me! Jean, there is something the matter. You are a man now, and I have no longer a right to treat you as a child, but you know how much I love you. If you have troubles or sorrows, why not tell them to me? Perhaps I could give you good counsel. Jean, why are you going to Paris?"

“I would rather not tell you; it will grieve you, but you have a right to know. I am going to Paris to ask to be exchanged into another regiment.”

“Into another regiment? To leave Souvigny?”

“Yes, precisely, to leave Souvigny for some time, for a little while, but at all events to leave Souvigny; that is what I want, that is what is necessary.”

“And I, Jean; you do not think of me? For a little while! a little while! but that is all I have to live—a little while. And during these last days which I owe to God’s mercy, it was my happiness, Jean, yes, it was my happiness to have you here, near me. And you would go away! Jean, wait a little, be patient, it will not be very long; wait until the good God has called me to Himself; wait until I am gone to meet your father and your mother again on the other side. Do not go away, Jean, do not go away!”

“If you love me I, too, love you, and you know it well.”

“Yes, I know it.”

“I have the same tenderness for you that I had when I was a little child, when you took me home, when you brought me up. My heart has not changed, it will never change. But if duty, if honor compel me to go——”

“Ah! if it is duty, if it is honor, I will say no

more, Jean. All must yield to that, all, all! I have always found you a good judge of your duty, a good judge of your honor. Go, my child, go. I ask you nothing. I desire to know nothing."

"Ah! but I want to tell you all," cried Jean, overcome by his emotion. "And it is better that you should know all. You will remain here, you will return to the chateau, you will see her again. She——"

"Who, she?"

"Bettina!"

"Bettina!"

"I love her, godfather, I love her!"

"Oh, my poor boy!"

"Forgive me for speaking to you of such things; but I tell them to you as I would tell them to my father. And then I have never had any one to speak to about it, and that stifles me. Yes, it is a madness that has taken possession of me little by little, in spite of myself; for you can well understand, *mon Dieu!* It was here that I first began to love her. When she came with her sister, you know, and the little rolls of money, and when her hair tumbled down, and that evening, the month of Mary! Since then I have been permitted to see her freely, familiarly; and you yourself have talked of her to me continually, you have extolled to me her

sweetness, her goodness. How many times you have told me that there was no one in the world lovelier than she !”

“ And I thought so, and I think so still ; and no one knows her better than myself, for I alone have seen her among the poor. If you knew how tender and brave she is on our rounds in the morning ! Neither misery nor suffering dismay her. But I am wrong to tell you all this.”

“ No, no, I will not see her again ; but I like to hear you speak of her.”

“ You will never in your life, Jean, find a better woman, or one who has a more noble character. One day when she took me out with her in her carriage, full of playthings—she was carrying the playthings to a little sick girl ; and in giving them to her, she talked so sweetly to the little thing, to make her smile and to amuse her, that I thought of you—and I remember now that I said to myself : ‘ Ah ! if only she were poor ! ’ ”

“ Yes, if only she were poor ! but she is not ! ”

“ Oh ! no. But what can be done, my poor child ? If it pains you to see her, to live near her, then, so that you may not suffer, go away. Jean, it must be ; go away ; and yet, and yet——”

The old priest grew thoughtful, and leaning his head in his hands, was silent for several minutes ; then he continued :

“And yet, Jean, do you know what I am thinking about? I have seen a great deal of Mademoiselle Bettina since she came to Longueval. And I have been thinking—it did not surprise me then—it seemed so natural that every one should be interested in you; but, indeed, she was always talking of you; yes, always.”

“Of me?”

“Yes, and of your father, and of your mother. She was curious to know all about your life, she asked me to explain to her what a soldier’s life was like—a true soldier, who loved his profession, and performed its duties conscientiously. It is strange, since you have told me this, what a tide of memories comes back to me. A thousand little things recur to me. For instance, she came back from Havre, day before yesterday, at three o’clock. Well, in an hour after her arrival she was here. And immediately she began to talk about you. She asked me if you had written, if you had been ill, when you would arrive, at what hour, if the regiment would come through the village.”

“It is useless, godfather, to recall all this.”

“No, it is not useless. She seemed so glad, so happy even, that she was to see you again. She intended to make a *fête* of the dinner to-night. She was to present you to her brother-in-law. There is

no one at the chateau, not a single guest. She made a point of that ; and I remember her last words as she stood in the door : ‘ There will be only five of us,’ she said to me, ‘ you and Monsieur Jean, my sister, my brother-in-law and I.’ And she added laughingly : ‘ A real family dinner.’ Her last words, just as she was going, were : ‘ A real family dinner !’ Do you know, Jean, what I think ?”

“ You must not think it, godfather, it must not be !”

“ Jean, I think that she loves you !”

“ And I, I think so too !”

“ You, too !”

“ When I left her three weeks ago she was so agitated, so moved ! She saw that I was sad and unhappy. She did not want to let me go. We were on the steps of the chateau. I had to fly—yes—fly. I should have spoken, have told her all. After going a little way I stopped and looked back. She could no longer see me. I was in the darkness. But I could see her. She stood there in the rain, motionless, her arms and shoulders bare, looking after me. Perhaps I am foolish to think so. Perhaps it was only a feeling of pity. But no, it was something more than pity ; for, do you know what she did the next morning ? She came out at five o’clock, in all the storm, to see me go by with the regiment, and

that is the way in which she bade me adieu. Oh! godfather! godfather!"

"But then," said the poor curé, completely overwhelmed, completely bewildered, "but then I do not understand it at all. If you love her, Jean, and if she loves you!"

"But it is for that very reason that I must go away. If it only concerned me! If I were sure that she had not discovered my love, sure that she was not afflicted by it, I would stay; I would stay if only for the pleasure of seeing her, and I would love her from afar without any hope, for nothing but the happiness of loving her. But she is perfectly conscious of it, and far from discouraging me. It is just this which compels me to go away."

"No, I cannot understand it. I know very well, my poor child, that we are talking about matters on which I am not an authority; but at least you are both of you good, young and attractive. You love her, she would love you, and you cannot!"

"But her money, godfather; but her money!"

"What matters her money? Her money has nothing to do with it! Is it on account of her money that you love her? It is rather in spite of her money. Your conscience can rest easy in that respect, and that is enough."

"No, that is not enough. It is not enough to

have a good opinion of one's self ; it is necessary that others should be of the same opinion."

" Oh ! Jean, among all who know you, who could misjudge you ?"

" Who knows ? and then there is something else besides this question of money, something more serious and important. I am not a suitable husband for her."

" And who is more worthy than you ?"

" It is not a question of my worth, it is a question of what she is, and of what I am ; it is a question of asking myself what her life ought to be, and what my life ought to be. One day Paul—you know he has rather a coarse way of saying things, but that often gives force to an idea—we were talking of her, and Paul suspecting nothing, or he would not have said it, he is very good hearted—well, Paul said to me : ' What she needs is a husband who devotes himself to her, entirely to her, a husband who has no other care than to make her life a perpetual *fête* ; in short, a husband who gives her the worth of her money.' You know me. Such a husband I cannot, I ought not to be. I am a soldier and I wish to remain a soldier. If the varying fortunes of my profession should some day send me to a little post in the Alps, or to some out of the way village in Algeria, can I ask her to follow me ? Can I con-

demn her to the life of a soldier's wife, which is, in fact, the life of a soldier? Think of the life she now leads, with all its luxury, all its pleasures!"

"Yes," said the abbé, "this is a more serious question than the money."

"So serious that no hesitation is possible. While I was alone in camp these last three weeks, I have thought it all over; I have thought of nothing else, and loving her as I love her, reasons must be very powerful which can let me see my duty clearly. I must go away, far, very far away. I shall suffer much, but I ought not to see her again! I ought not to see her again!"

Jean dropped into a chair by the hearth, and sat there overwhelmed with his sorrow. The old priest gazed at him sadly.

"Oh! to see you so unhappy! my poor child! that such grief should come to you! It is very sad, very cruel——"

At this moment there was a light knock at the door.

"Do not be uneasy, Jean," said the curé; "I will not let any one come in."

The abbé went to the door, opened it, and started back as if he had seen an unexpected apparition.

It was Bettina. She saw Jean instantly, and going straight to him:

“ You ? ” she cried. “ Oh ! how glad I am ! ”

He had risen, she took both his hands, and addressing the abbé :

“ Pardon me, Monsieur le Curé, if I greet him first. I saw you yesterday, and I have not see him for three whole weeks ; not since that evening when he went away so sad and suffering.”

She still held Jean’s hands. He had not strength to move or say one word.

“ And are you better now ? ” continued Bettina. “ No, not yet, I can see it, still sad. Ah ! how well it was that I came ! I must have had an inspiration. And yet I am a little, very much, embarrassed to find you here. You will understand when you know what I come to ask your godfather.”

She dropped Jean’s hands and turning to the abbé :

“ I come, Monsieur le Curé, to beg you to listen to my confession. Yes, my confession. But you need not go away, Monsieur Jean. I will make my confession publicly. I am very willing to speak before you, and I think, perhaps, it will be better. Let us sit down.”

She was full of courage and confidence. She was in a fever, but it was the fever which gives to the soldier on the field of battle, order, heroism, and disregard of danger.

The emotion which caused Bettina's heart to beat so quickly was lofty and noble. She said to herself :

"I want to be loved ! I want to love ! I want to be happy ! I want him to be happy ! And, since he has not courage enough, I must have it for both of us ; I must take the field alone, and with a fearless heart march on to the conquest of our love, of our happiness."

Bettina's first words completely conquered both the abbé and Jean. They let her speak while they remained silent. They felt that the hour was, indeed, supreme, they knew that what was about to happen would be decisive and irrevocable ; but they could not foresee. They sat down passively, almost automatically. They waited—they listened. Between these two bewildered men, Bettina alone was self-possessed. Her voice was clear and distinct as she began :

"First, I will tell you, Monsieur le Curé, to make your conscience entirely easy, that I am here with the full consent of my sister and my brother-in-law. They know why I came, they know what I am going to do. They not only know it, they approve of it. That is understood, is it not ? Well ! It is your letter, Monsieur Jean, which brings me here ; the letter in which you told my sister that you could not come to dine with us this evening, and that you

were absolutely obliged to go away. This letter disarranged all my plans. This evening, with the same permission of my sister and my brother-in-law, I wanted to take you to the park, Monsieur Jean, to there sit down with you. I was even so childish as to choose the very place, beforehand, and deliver a little address to you—carefully prepared and studied, and almost learned by heart ; for ever since your departure I have thought of nothing else. I recite it to myself from morning till night. This was what I proposed to do, and you can understand how disconcerted I was when your letter came. I reflected a little while, and then I said to myself that, if I addressed my little speech to your godfather, it would be almost the same as if to yourself. I have therefore come, Monsieur le Curé, to beg you to listen to me.”

“ I am listening to you,” faltered the abbé.

“ I am rich, Monsieur le Curé, very rich ; and to be frank, I love my money—yes, I love it very much. I owe to it the luxury which surrounds me, this luxury, which, I admit—this is a confession—is not disagreeable to me. My excuse is, that I am very young ; perhaps this will pass away with age. But I am not quite sure of. And I have another excuse ; it is, that if I love my money for all the pleasures it procures for me, I love it still more for

the good it enables me to do to those around me. I love it selfishly, if you will, for the delight which the pleasure of giving affords me. Indeed, I do not think my fortune fell into bad hands. For, Monsieur le Curé, it seems to me that just as you have the charge of souls, so I have charge of my riches. I always say to myself: 'Above all things, I desire that my husband shall be worthy to share this immense fortune; I want to be sure that he will help me to make good use of it while I live, and after my death, should I die first. Besides I must love the man who will be my husband!' And here, Monsieur le Curé, is where my confession really begins. There is a man, who, for the last two months, has done all that he could to conceal his love from me. But I do not doubt he loves me—for you do love me, Jean, do you not?"

"Yes," said Jean in a low voice, looking down guiltily, "yes, I love you!"

"I was sure of it, but I wanted to hear you say so. And now, Jean, I implore you, do not say a single word. It would be useless and only trouble me, and hinder me from going straight through to the end and telling you what I have resolved to say to you. Promise me to sit there silently and hear me."

"Yes, I promise."

Bettina lost her self-command for a moment, and her voice trembled; she went on, however, with a playfulness that was a little forced:

“Monsieur le Curé, I do not positively accuse you of all that has happened, but nevertheless it is a little your fault.”

“My fault!”

“Ah! you must not speak, either. Yes, I repeat it, your fault. I am sure that you have told Jean a great deal about me—a great deal too much. Perhaps, except for that, he would not have thought of me. And at the same time you have told me a great deal about him—not too much; no, no, but at least a good deal! Then I, having so much confidence in you, began to watch and study him more attentively. I began to compare him with all those who during the past year had asked my hand in marriage. It seemed to me that he was superior to them in every respect. At last, one day, or rather one evening—it was three weeks ago, the night before your departure, Jean—I discovered that I loved you. Yes, Jean, I love you! I implore you, Jean, not to speak; sit still and do not come near me. I had plenty of courage when I came, but you see I am losing it. I have still something to say to you, most important of all. Jean, listen to me. I do not desire an answer prompted by your emotion. I know that you

love me. If you should marry me it must be not only from love but from reason. During the fortnight which preceded your departure you took such pains to shun me; you were so reserved when we met that I could not be myself with you. Perhaps there are some traits in my character of which you know nothing as yet. Jean, I understand you; I know what I should undertake in becoming your wife, and I would be not only loving and tender, but brave and strong. Your whole life is known to me; your godfather has told it to me. I know why you are a soldier, I know what duties and sacrifices you may have to encounter in the future. Jean, do not distrust me; I will not dissuade you from any of these duties and sacrifices. You may have thought that I would wish you to abandon your profession. Never! never! I would never ask you to do such a thing. I love you, and I wish you to be just what you are. It is because your life is different and better than the lives of all those who have sought me for a wife that I have wished you to be my husband. I would not love you so well, perhaps I would not love you at all—though that would be hardly possible—if you lived as they do. When I could I would follow you, and everywhere that you were my duty and my happiness would be; and if a day should come when you could not take me with you—

a day when you must depart alone—oh, Jean ! that day I promise you I will be brave, so that you shall not lose your courage. And now, Monsieur le Curé, it is not to him, it is to you that I address myself, and I want you to answer me: Tell me, if he loves me and if he thinks me worthy of him, would it be just to punish me so severely for my fortune? Ought he not to consent to be my husband?"

"Jean," said the old priest solemnly, "marry her; it is your duty, and it will be your happiness!"

Jean approached Bettina, took her in his arms, and imprinted his first kiss on her forehead.

Bettina gently released herself, and addressing the abbé:

"And now, Monsieur le Curé, I want to ask you something more; I wish, I wish——"

"What is it you wish?"

"I wish, Monsieur le Curé, that you would kiss me too."

The old priest kissed her on both cheeks, and Bettina went on:

"You have often told me, Monsieur le Curé, that Jean was like a son to you, and may not I be like a daughter? Then you will have two children."

.

A month afterward, on the 12th of September,

Bettina, in the simplest of bridal robes, stood before the altar in the church of Longueval.

Nannie Turner had solicited the honor of playing the organ on this joyful occasion; for the poor little harmonium had disappeared. An organ, with its shining pipes, had been put up in the gallery of the church. It was Miss Percival's wedding present to the Abbé Constantin.

The old curé said the mass. Jean and Bettina knelt before him; he pronounced the benediction, and stood with outstretched hands a few moments in prayer, invoking all the graces of heaven upon the heads of his two children.

Then the organ began to play that same reverie of Chopin's which Bettina played the first time that she came into the little village church, where the happiness of her life was to be consecrated.

And this time it was Bettina who wept.

THE END.

A MARRIAGE FOR LOVE.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

LUDOVIC HALEVY.

TRANSLATED BY

ANNIE W. AYER AND HELEN T. SLATE.

A MARRIAGE FOR LOVE.

HE, in plain, terse sentences, entered in his diary every morning and evening a brief account of each day's events. He had begun when he was twenty, on the third of October, 1869, and this was the entry under that date:

I am appointed second lieutenant of the 21st Chasseurs.

When the thirty-first of December arrived he consigned to a drawer the diary of the old year and passed on to that of the ensuing year.

She, with greater care and elaboration, kept in little blue morocco books, which were hidden away under lock and key, a scrupulous account of her girlish doings. She had begun when she was sixteen and the first entry, dated May 17th, 1876, ran as follows:

To-day I put on my first long dress.

She was married on the seventeenth of August, 1879, and there her entries ceased. She no longer

wrote in the little books of blue morocco; but she had kept, mysteriously hidden away at the bottom of a secret drawer, the volumes that told of her life between the month of May, 1876, and the month of August, 1879, between her first long dress and her marriage.

He, too, was married on the seventeenth of August, 1879; but he had not ceased to make his daily entries, and in one of the drawers of his desk were thirteen little volumes, where was kept an exact, if dry record of his life from day to day. From time to time he would amuse himself by taking up, haphazard, one of these diaries. He would open it, read fifteen or twenty pages, and so live over the past again, putting *I was* in place of *I am*.

Now about ten o'clock in the evening of the nineteenth of June, 1881, the erstwhile second lieutenant of 1869, now captain and recommended for *chef d'escadron*, was seated alone at his desk in his study, and, his head supported in his hands, was trying to remember whether it was in the spring of 1878 or 1879 that he had published in the *Bulletin de la Réunion des Officiers* an article on the new organization of the transportation system in Austro-Hungary. It occurred to him that he would probably find in his diaries the date of the publication.

He opened the drawer where the diaries were stored and by chance took up that of the year 1879. He began to finger the leaves of the little volume. He turned page after page, then paused suddenly and read with interest a sentence that caused him to smile. He rose, moved away from the desk, seated himself in an easy chair, and there continued his reading. He had no longer any thought for the organization of the transportation system in Austro-Hungary. Bygone memories were evidently awakening in his heart, bringing with them a slight smile to his lips and a softness into his eyes. Three or four times this captain of cavalry had to check the beginning, the very small beginning of a tear.

He was absorbed in his reading when the study *portières* parted softly, very softly ; an enchanting blond head appeared, framed in the ancient tapestries.

What was he doing in that great armchair? Was he asleep? He had ruthlessly sent her away half an hour before, because he wished to work, and when she was there she hindered him, disturbed him, and put into his head ideas that were not altogether conducive to study.

Then, with infinite precautions, the small figure, slight and supple, in the long folds of the *peignoir* of white muslin, crept into the room, took three or

four steps on tiptoe, and leaned forward a little to one side. He was not asleep. He was reading very busily, for he had not heard anything, nor had he stirred. He was right. Reading is work.

Holding her breath, she continued on her way to the armchair, softly, very softly—and as she did so, she asked herself a question. She was still something of a child—twenty-one, and very much in love. This must be her excuse, for this was the question that she asked herself :

“Where shall I kiss him ? On the forehead, on the cheek—or anywhere, just as it happens?”

She came nearer. She almost touched the captain’s hair with the tips of her fingers, and she had just decided upon *anywhere, just as it happens*, when all of a sudden she grew very pale. She had just read on the two open pages of the little diary :

June 16th.

I love her !

June 17th.

I love her !!

A single exclamation point after the first *I love her !* Two after the second. It had increased between the sixteenth and the seventeenth.

She gave a low cry.

“What is that?” she cried, all trembling. “What is that?”

She grew faint. He started up and caught her in his arms, but she burst into tears, and then came a torrent of words broken by sobs:

“June 16th: I love her! June 17th: I love her!! To-day is the nineteenth! You love another woman! Oh, it is horrible! horrible!”

He, drying her tears with two kisses:

“Look, you foolish child, look!”

He opened the diary at the first page where was printed in large characters: 1879.

“Ah,” she cried joyfully, yet with a lingering sob or two. “You meant me! you meant me!”

Then she added naïvely, imprudently:

“So you kept a diary, too?”

“What! I too? Then it seems that you——”

And she was forced to confess that if he had written in a little, black morocco diary: *I love her*, she had written in a little blue morocco diary: *I love him*. And when she said to her husband:

“Show the diary to me, show it to me, I want to see if there are three exclamation points on the eighteenth and four on the nineteenth.”

“Go and fetch your little books and we will compare notes. We shall see which of us has the advantage in exclamation points.”

The temptation was too great. She went in search of the year 1879 and returned with three volumes of quite respectable size.

"Three volumes !" he exclaimed.

"Yes, the first nine months, and you have only one miserable little notebook for the whole year !"

"One can say a great deal in a few words. You shall see. Come and sit down beside me. There is room for two in the armchair."

"Yes, if I sit on your knee. But that won't do."

"Why not?"

"Because there may be things in my diary that you must not see."

She held up the blue volumes, and he holding up his:

"Here in mine too, perhaps. You are right. Let us sit opposite each other. We will read only what we wish to."

"And we can leave things out?"

"That is understood," he said. "Begin."

"No, you begin, so as to give me courage."

"Very well, but where shall I begin?"

"Oh !" she answered, "where *I* begin."

"No, I must begin a little before you ; I must begin where Jupiter begins."

"Quite right. Find where Jupiter begins."

"Let me see—that ought to be during the first

two weeks of May. Yes, here we are: 'Thursday, May 15th. Must go to Chéri's and look at Jupiter, bay horse, seven years old. Entered in catalogue as *excellent saddle horse, high action, good jumper, has been ridden under sidesaddle*. To be sold on May 21st. Highly recommended by Estilly.' And two pages further on: 'Saturday, May 17th. Saw Jupiter. The horse appears well. Shall go as high as 2,500 francs.' Then four pages further: 'Wednesday, May 21st——' "

"The day of our meeting on the train. I remember the date."

"Yes, you are right—'Wednesday, May 21st. To the War Office. To my sister's. Bought Jupiter—1,900 francs. On the way back on the train, charming young girl seated opposite me.' "

"Is that there? You are not inventing a little out of politeness?"

"I am not inventing anything."

"Let me see."

"Well, look!"

"Yes, I see—*charming*—yes, charming is there."

"It's your turn now. You ought to have something on May 21st."

"I hope not! Do you suppose that I wrote: 'On the way back on the train, charming young man seated opposite me?'"

“No, not charming young man—but look, all the same.”

“Just to ease my conscience, let me see. ‘Wednesday, May 21st. To the Louvre. To my aunt’s. To the salôn.’ There is nothing, I tell you! Wait! Yes, I see something.”

“I was sure of it. You noticed me.”

“Here is what there is: ‘On my way home on the train, seated opposite me was a young man. He looked at me the whole time. When I raised my eyes he dropped his, but as soon as I dropped mine he would look up again, and after we left Chaton I didn’t dare raise my eyes at all, for I was so conscious of his gaze. I had an English novel in my bag; I took it out and began to read, but that evening I had to re-read all that I thought I had read on the train.’”

“That is not all. I’m sure there’s something more.”

“Yes, but nothing the least interesting.”

“Never mind; go on. I read all mine.”

“Oh! you—you. I see how it will be. You will have nothing but dry little entries, while mine will be full of elaborate details. I will tell you why. When my governess, Mademoiselle Guizard, left me she said to me: ‘My dear child, you don’t write at all badly, but you must continue to work. You must practice

exercises in composition as much as in music. Make it a custom to write three or four pages every evening, it doesn't matter what, about your day's doings, the visits you have made or received, etc.' So I did what Mademoiselle Guizard advised."

"Yes, yes."

"No, I want to explain myself clearly, because I know what will happen. Presently you will think you see excess of feeling and outbursts of passion in what are really nothing but exercises in style and attempts at French composition. I don't want you to be mistaken."

"I sha'n't be; but what comes after 'He looked at me all the time?'"

"Nothing at all about you. Listen: 'Can what grandmamma said day before yesterday be true? It's extraordinary, but little Jeanne has grown very pretty all at once.'" Then followed a long discussion between mamma and grandmamma. Mamma reproached grandmamma for saying such things to me and making me self-conscious, etc., etc. Nothing of any interest, I tell you. Go on."

"I have nothing on the 22d."

"Neither have I."

"May 23d. Jupiter arrived. Tried the horse on the terrace and in the forest. Fine beast."

"And what about me?"

“Nothing.”

“Ah! It is a little humiliating, because I have something about you on the 23d: ‘The young man who stared at me on train day before yesterday is an officer. He passed awhile ago on horseback and in uniform. He had three silver stripes on his sleeve. I say that he passed; he did more than pass. What I am going to write is absurd, but as long as I am writing for myself alone—Did he really notice me on the train day before yesterday? Has he been making inquiries about me? Does he know that I live here? Did he wish to show off before me? He stayed a quarter of an hour at least on the terrace between the Pavilion of Henry IV. and the gate, putting his horse through his paces, making him pirouette and change foot, *volte*, etc., etc. He must be a very vulgar man to hope to fascinate me by such means.’”

“What injustice! You can see here in my diary: ‘Tried Jupiter.’ I tried Jupiter and found that he had received a very brilliant education. But go on.”

“I am going on. ‘That evening after dinner I said to Georges, who, in spite of his twelve years, still spends his time in playing with tin soldiers and is well posted in military matters: “Georges, what officer has three silver stripes on his sleeve?” “A

captain." "Is it a fine thing to be a captain?" "It depends. It's a fine thing at twenty-five, but a bad thing at fifty." "Twenty-five, he may be a little older, but not much." Grandmamma, who has a quick ear, had heard my conversation with Georges, and exclaimed: "Do you know what is going on? Jeanne is asking Georges for information about the military." I grew red as a peony. Then followed a lengthy discussion. Grandmamma declared that she has a fondness for military men, and mamma insists that she could never resign herself to giving me to a man who would drag me about from garrison to garrison. I wonder why I am writing all this nonsense. Of course it is in obedience to Mademoiselle Guizard! There, you see, it is written. It is your turn now; I have finished."

"On the 24th, two lines: 'Met in the forest the young lady I saw on the train last Wednesday. Decidedly pretty and doesn't look badly on horse-back.'"

"Is that all? It's concise enough! It needs a commentary."

"Here it is, my love. You are right; my entries are abominably dry, but, you see, if I were not afraid of seeming to wish to compose a madrigal——"

"Don't be afraid. There is no one here."

"I would tell you that all that is not written in the diary is written here in my heart. That May morning, that meeting in the forest, I can remember it all to-day, to the smallest detail, even after a lapse of two years. We had been maneuvering from five to seven in a horrible dust on the plain of Loges. I took my squadron back to quarters, changed horses, and set off again on Jupiter."

"Dear Jupiter!"

"Fifteen minutes later I was riding at a gallop up a gently sloping avenue quite near Le Val. I saw a little cavalcade approaching, you on your black mare, Jenny, Georges on his roan pony, and old Louis behind on a big, gray horse. You see, I remember even the color of the horses. All at once, when I was some fifty meters off, my breath was fairly taken away. I recognized you. I brought poor Jupiter sharply to a walk. The little cavalcade passed close by me. I can still see you with your gray habit, your black hat, and your golden hair curling under your veil. And as you passed I said to myself: 'There is nothing in all the world more charming than this little girl.' And you, what did you say?"

"What did I say? I don't remember, but this is what I wrote."

And in a voice that trembled slightly, for she had

been greatly touched by the little commentary, Jeanne read what follows :

“ ‘ I met him this morning near Le Val. He was approaching at a gallop, but all of a sudden, on recognizing me, he stopped his horse—yes, on recognizing me. I saw the motion he made. I know what it is to stop a horse at a gallop. One gives him some warning. But he stopped his horse without any, suddenly, roughly, almost on the instant. He passed quite close to us. I dared not look at him, but I knew that he was looking at me. He was not ten paces away from us when that little donkey of a Georges said to me: “ Oh, Jeanne, did you see? How funny he was, all covered with dust! He looked like a *pierrot*. He is captain in the 21st. No. 21 was on the collar of his uniform.” I was furious with Georges. I hope he didn’t hear!’ ”

“ I did hear. I remember now.”

“ Come, you read now, it’s your turn.”

“ ‘ Wednesday, May 25th. Saw my unknown again. She lives in one of the houses on the terrace. I was driving by ; she was at the window ; she saw me and it seemed to me that it was because she saw me that she left the window abruptly, very abruptly. *Mon dieu*, how pretty she is!’ ”

“ Why! It’s a little less dry than it was awhile

ago. You are improving. You are putting in your verbs. You are beginning to write."

"Perhaps because I was beginning to love. Your turn now."

"May 25th, I was at the window; I saw approaching a pretty little English cart, all glittering in the sun, and drawn by a love of a pony, as black as ink; on the seat was an immaculate little groom, and beside the groom, he, the captain. I ought to have remained quietly at the window; I could not. I said to myself: "I shall have to look at him, he will see that I am looking at him." I was seized with fright. I retreated to the farther end of the *salôn*. Grandmamma said to me: "What is the matter with you, Jeanne?" "Nothing at all, grandmamma," I answered. Georges, who was beside me at the window, shouted: "Jeanne, I'm sure the captain who just passed in the pretty little cart is the *pierrot* we saw yesterday."'"

"The *pierrot* was myself?"

"You, yourself. I have nothing at all on the 26th. Oh, you may read. There's nothing about you. 'Tried on my pink gown. It fitted well but there weren't enough pleats. I must have some more put in, etc., etc.' I thought only of my pink gown. You see, I wasn't so preoccupied——"

"Well! for me the 26th was a great day; it was

the day when Picot appeared on the scene. There are only two lines but they are eloquent. ‘Gave twenty francs to Picot. He is a profound diplomatist.’ ”

“Here, if ever, is the place for another commentary.”

“Willingly. While breakfasting at mess that morning, I said to Dubrisay, who was always prowling about the forest on horseback: ‘Do you know a young lady who rides with a little chap of twelve or so—and an old servant?’ ‘Let me see—she rides a black mare.’ ‘And the servant a gray horse,’ added another. ‘And the boy a roan pony,’ supplemented a third. Thereupon ensued an animated discussion as to the merits of the horses. The roan pony seemed to be in good condition, and the black mare a trifle used up.”

“Quite true—fortunately!”

“Yes, indeed, fortunately! I said in reply: ‘I wasn’t asking either about the gray horse or the black mare—I was asking about the young lady. And all three answered that they never looked at anything but the horses. I had made good progress, indeed! I went back to my quarters. Toward three o’clock, I saw Picot, my orderly, sauntering about the courtyard; I called to him from the window. Picot is a Parisian and very quick-witted. I said to

him: 'Picot, try and find out who the people are who live in such and such a house on the terrace. The entrance is on the Rue des Arcades.' 'Very good, *mon capitaine*.' 'But discreetly, you understand.' 'Yes, *mon capitaine*.' 'If you learn anything tell me to-morrow morning at quarters.'"

"You weren't very impatient; you might have said to come back at once."

"Exactly what he did. An hour later he returned triumphant. And then Picot launched forth into so remarkable a narrative that I amused myself by setting it down in my diary as exactly as possible."

"'I amused myself by!' What a cowardly subterfuge! Why don't you tell the truth? Confess that it was not disagreeable to you to write things that concerned me, and perhaps I will admit that it was not disagreeable to me to write things that concerned——"

"Very well, I confess."

"And so do I. Now go on reading."

"I obey. Picot arrived and said to me: '*Mon capitaine*, I know all. Only, I beg that when I begin you will not interrupt me with questions, or you will confuse me. I've kept repeating my lesson over and over again all the way back, so as not to forget it. The house was rented three weeks ago

by Parisians. The master is a M. Lablinière, an engineer, a manufacturer—he makes steam engines, telegraphs, etc. He lives with his mother-in-law, his wife, and his two children: a young lady, nineteen years old, and a little boy, twelve years old. Wait; I know the children's names: Jeanne and Georges. They are rich, very rich. Five horses in the stables, three carriages in the coachhouse, four men servants, a cook, three maids: Julia, Adélai—but the names of the maids can't concern you, *mon capitaine*. Their Paris address is 28 Boulevard Haussmann. How did I learn all this? In talking with the *concierge*. No, don't interrupt me. I see what is troubling you, *mon capitaine*. You think that I have been imprudent, that I said that I was sent by you? Not at all. You ask, how did that idiot of a Picot manage to open conversation? Ah, it wasn't very hard, *mon capitaine*! It wasn't any great credit to me! The *concierge* was at his door. I came up to him quite leisurely, with the air of a soldier sauntering along without any object in view, and when I was directly in front of him, I did like this: “*Ouf*, but it's warm!” He answered: “Yes, indeed, it is warm.” I went on: “Not so warm as yesterday though.” He answered: “No, because there's a little breeze.”

“The ice was broken; we fell to talking; just as

I was contriving to lead up to the great question I saw descending the steps at the lower end of the courtyard, a piece of bread in her hand, a devilish pretty young lady—with your permission, *mon capitaine*. “Is that a townswoman of yours?” I said to the *concierge*. “No,” he answered, “the daughter of the tenant, a gentleman from Paris.”

“Then he began to rattle off what I just told you. I repeat, I don’t take any credit for it, *mon capitaine*. He went all by himself. He was still going when I saw the young lady cross the courtyard without the piece of bread. “There she is, again,” the *concierge* said to me. “She goes to the stables every day to carry bread to her horse.”

“The young lady remounted the steps, but very slowly, looking at me all the time. She seemed surprised to see me there and seemed to be saying to herself: “What can that *chasseur* be doing here?”

“She entered the house. Meanwhile the *concierge* was singing the young lady’s praises. And how he praised her! So sweet, so good. And not only to horses, but to people as well! Three weeks ago the *concierge’s* little daughter was sick. And do you know that this young lady— But your pardon, *mon capitaine*, these details may not interest you. They do interest you? Well, then, I’ll go on. I

was saying that she came to see the *concierge's* little daughter every day; she sent her soups and good things to eat; she herself brought her toys and sweets; she used to stay at the lodge hours at a time, telling the child stories.

“‘The *concierge* was just telling me this when a lady’s maid appeared—quite a pretty young person, *mon capitaine*, with your permission. She came up to us and said to the *concierge*: “Isn’t there a letter for mademoiselle?” “Why, no, I always take mademoiselle’s letters up immediately, you know very well.”

“‘As for me I said to myself: “Come, perhaps you can get something out of the lady’s maid?” So I began again: “It is warm, mademoiselle.” “Yes, indeed!” “Not quite so warm as yesterday,” I continued.

“‘This succeeded quite as well as with the *concierge* and the conversation began again. The lady’s maid asked me if I knew a certain Camus, brigadier in the tenth hussars. We were chatting away when she suddenly exclaimed: “I must be going. Mademoiselle is waiting for me!” “Will your mistress be angry, will she scold you?” “My mistress angry with me, scold me? Never! There is no one better than mademoiselle in all the world.””

“Is that all?”

“Yes, that is all.”

“So you set a spy on me.”

“Certainly. But what of your account of the 26th?”

“Here it is. ‘Tuesday, May 27th. Yesterday morning I went to take some bread to Nelly; as I went down the steps I saw a soldier talking with the *concierge*. I stayed five minutes in the stable. On coming out I looked and the soldier was still there. I went up to my room. There I found Julie. Oh, it is dreadful to be consumed with curiosity. I said to Julie: “I am expecting a letter from Paris; go and see if there isn’t one at the *concierge’s*.” She went. I waited. Julie did not return. I went into my dressing-room, which overlooks the court, and I saw Julie; she was talking with the soldier! At last she returned. “There was no letter, mademoiselle.” “You were away a long time.” “Why, no, mademoiselle.” “Yes, indeed, I saw you; you were talking with a hussar.” “A hussar! Oh, no, mademoiselle!” “But I saw you.” “I was not talking with a hussar; he was a *chasseur*; there is a difference in the uniform. Hussars have white braid and *chasseurs* have black; the hussars’ collars are like the *dolman* and the *chasseurs*’ collars are red.” “How do you know all that, Julie?” “I

have a cousin in the hussars, mademoiselle. There are no hussars here at St. Germaine, only chasseurs ; two regiments, the 21st and the 22d, which form one brigade. The soldier who was here was a chasseur of the 21st."

"Of the 21st ! His regiment ! My military conversation with Julie was destined to have deplorable consequences. About six o'clock I took a turn on the terrace with mamma. We met two officers of the chasseurs. "Those hussars have fine horses," mamma observed to me.

"I answered heedlessly : "They are not hussars, mamma, they are chasseurs ; hussars have white braid and chasseurs black ; the hussars' collars are the same as their dol——"

"I did not finish. I glanced at mamma. She was aghast. "How do you know all this?" she demanded. "*Mon dieu*, mamma, from Julie ! She has a cousin in the hussars. She told me one day when she was dressing my hair." "Strange subject for conversation !" said mamma.

"Nothing more was said ; but that was not the end of it. Papa came back from Paris and at dinner he told us that he had met an officer on the train. Could it be he ! A colonel ! It was not he ! Papa had spent a month at Canterets last year with this colonel. They played whist together. They had

renewed their acquaintance, and papa had invited him to dinner on Wednesday of the following week, the fourth of June.

“ ‘I said to papa : “Is the colonel’s regiment at Saint Germain?” “Yes, his regiment is here.” “Is it the 21st or the 22d?” “Are there two regiments here?” “Yes, papa, the 21st and the 22d ; they form one brigade.”

“ ‘Here was papa even more astounded than mamma. “Where did you learn all this?” “Oh, from Julie ; she has a cousin in the hussars.” “I don’t understand it at all,” said mamma ; “for some time Jeanne has talked of nothing but chasseurs and hussars.” “Eh, eh !” said grandmamma, “perhaps she has noticed some fine young officer.”

“ ‘I grew scarlet, I answered impatiently, almost angrily. I begin to bear a serious grudge against this young man whom I do not know and never shall know. Yes, I bear him a grudge for having broken in upon my life like this. Why did he look at me on the train ? Why did he come and show off under my windows ? Why did he bring his horse to a walk on seeing me ? If I were to meet him I would put my horse to a gallop, a fast gallop. Alas ! a fast gallop is too much for my poor Nelly. She is growing old. Papa is to give me a new horse on my birthday.

“ ‘I should like to know if it is *his* colonel who is to dine here on the fourth.’ ”

This was the last sentence of the entry for May 27th. She glanced over some ten pages of her diary.

“From the 28th of May to the 3d of June, nothing, absolutely nothing about you.”

“Nor have I anything about you. It was because we were unhappy enough not to see each other during that week. I was not at Saint Germain. The general and the colonels, with some twenty officers of the two regiments, had gone to take part in some maneuvers between Vernon and Rouen. I had taken Jupiter, and my notes were filled with flattering things about my new horse: ‘Jupiter irreproachable—strong, ambitious and gentle. The colonel rode him yesterday and pronounced him perfect, etc., etc.’ The 3d of June, at eight o’clock at night, we returned to Saint Germain, and the 4th of June—I had not forgotten you; here, look: ‘Shall I see the little girl with the fair hair again?’ ”

“And this is my entry for the 4th of June: ‘I know his name. The colonel was here to dinner this evening. He came at seven o’clock. My eyes went straight to the collar of his uniform. I saw the No. 21. He was *his* colonel. During dinner the conversation was utterly commonplace, but after

dinner, while I was serving coffee: "Colonel," said papa, "perhaps you can do me a favor. I wish to find a horse for this little person; if you know of a good animal, perfectly gentle——"

"It was for me to protest: "Not too gentle, colonel; I ride very well." (It is true, I do ride well.) "I will look," answered the colonel, "and I will make inquiries— Ah! one of the officers in my regiment has a horse that would suit you perfectly, mademoiselle. I rode him a few days ago. He is perfect." "If he would sell him to me at a good profit," said papa. "Oh, a good profit wouldn't influence this officer; he is rich, very rich. He is a captain—M. de Léonelle." "A captain and rich?" cried Georges. "Perhaps it's the officer we saw the other day with a little cart and a black pony." "That was he." "Oh, my sister and I know him well; we have met him several times."

"I felt my cheeks flame, literally flame. The colonel looked at me. I must have been crimson. He must have noticed. He left at ten, and on leaving he said to me: "I will speak to M. Léonelle tomorrow morning, but I am afraid I shall not succeed. He is devoted to his horse."

"So it has come to this! Am I to buy his horse? Papa has opened an account of three thousand francs for me.'"

"Now we come to June 5th, the decisive day, the meeting at the photographer's."

"And your first visit. Begin."

The distance between them had diminished. She had come to sit, not on his knee, but on a little cushion at his feet, and as he read she rested her head lovingly against his knee, so that taking advantage of the ground—he commanded the situation—the captain began to embrace Jeanne with fervor. She released herself—not at once.

"Come, stop," she said, "stop and begin."

He began :

"Thursday, June 5th. After maneuvers this morning, we were returning at a walk along the Avenue des Loges. The adjutant summoned me to the colonel, I joined him at the head of the column. "Captain," he said, "you don't happen to want to sell your new horse, do you?" "Certainly not, *mon colonel*." "Not even at a good profit?" "Not even at a good profit." "It was for a pretty little person and one who knows you." "Who knows me, *mon colonel*?" "Yes, she has met you several times, has seen you on the terrace, in fact she seemed to know you, and I even thought I noticed that she blushed very perceptibly when I mentioned your name yesterday." "And who is she, *mon colonel*?" "She is the daughter of an

engineer, a M. Lablinière." "A blonde, *mon colonel*?" "Yes, a blonde." "Who lives in a house on the terrace?" "The same; you see you know her." "By sight only, *mon colonel*." "Very well, let us see if you will give up your horse to this pretty little blonde. *Au revoir, capitain*."

"Sell Jupiter? To any one else, never! To her! I hesitate—she is so pretty! So she blushed when she heard my name? Why?

"My sister Louise arrived at eleven. She came with her children to breakfast with me. It was the fête of Saint Germain, and after breakfast the children wanted to visit the booths. "Uncle, you will let us have our pictures taken if there is a photographer," they begged. "Agreed," I answered.

"There happened to be a photographer; we entered his tent. She was there! with her little brother, her mother, and a great black poodle. The little brother was on his knees on the ground beside the black poodle and was trying to make him keep quiet: "Come, Bob, don't move, you are to have your picture taken."

"But Bob paid no attention to the little fellow's entreaties and at last the child lost patience: "Speak to him, Jeanne, speak to him: You are the only one he minds, and speak to him in English ;

he understands English better than French." "No, Georges, what nonsense." "Oh, Jeanne, please, Jeanne," he pleaded.

She yielded and looked sternly at Monsieur Bob : "Now Bob, Master Bob, obey! look at me! So! Now be still! Hush! Still!"

" 'She certainly had influence over the black poodle. He remained motionless. Her voice is charming. And her face! I could look at it at my leisure in the full light. She is a marvel of youth and grace.' "

"Wait a moment—show me."

"Why?"

"I am always suspecting some little fabrications."

"You are mistaken. Look!"

"Yes, I see—'marvel of youth and grace.' That will do. Go on."

" 'She shall have Jupiter! On leaving, said to my sister (it seemed to me as though there was some emotion in her voice): "I beg your pardon, madame, for having kept you waiting." I ought to have found something to say; but I could think of nothing, nothing. I was ridiculous. I bowed. She made me a slight inclination and left the photographer's tent. "What a charming young girl," my sister said to me. "Ah, she is indeed," I answered.

“‘And this set me going ! I told my sister her name and where she lived, etc. I had to talk about her. Amazement on my sister’s part. “Why, you must be in love with her !” “In love, no !” “Yes, you are. Well, we must make inquiries. She would make a delightful sister-in-law.”

“‘I escorted Louise to the train. No, I am not in love. But she shall have Jupiter ! One thing makes me uneasy. No, Chère’s catalogue said : *Has been ridden under sidesaddle*. But one must beware of information given in catalogues. Poor, dear, little girl ! What if an accident were to befall her ! I had a ladies’ saddle at my quarters. My sister used to come occasionally to ride with me. “Put the sidesaddle on Jupiter,” I said to Picot, “and lead him to the *manège*. Take a blanket.”

“‘Fifteen minutes later I made Picot mount Jupiter *en dame* ; I wrapped the blanket about Picot’s legs in lieu of a skirt. Jupiter broke into a canter. “Ah *mon capitaine*, he knows his business,” cried Picot, “he has been ridden *en dame*.”

“‘I wished to try him myself. I mounted Jupiter, my legs enveloped in the blanket. I trotted Jupiter, cantered him, and, as I did so, I said to myself : To think than I am here in this position and in this ridiculous garb just because I met on the train, two weeks ago, a fair-haired little girl who was reading an English novel !

“‘There is no doubt that Jupiter is a good ladies’ horse. She shall have Jupiter! Yes, but how shall I give him to her? The proper thing would be to place the horse at the colonel’s disposal. No, I will go to her house myself at once. I went, Picot followed me, leading Jupiter. We reached the house, we entered the courtyard. I glanced at Picot; he had a sly air. He was doubtless saying to himself: ‘Oh, ho! so this is why *mon capitaine* sent me to make inquiries?’”

“‘I rang. “Monsieur Lablinière?” “Monsieur is in Paris.” “Madame Lablinière?” “Madame is at home.” “Take in my card and say that I have come in regard to a horse.”

“‘The servant was about to announce me. Suppose she should not be there! Ah, she was there! with her mother, her grandmother, her brother, and her black poodle. I don’t know what happened after that. I must have made myself ridiculous. I remember vaguely that we talked about pelhams and sliding martingales. I think I told her that the horse was named Jupiter; and I took my leave, begging her to keep Jupiter and try him for a week, two weeks. It was also necessary to speak about the price. The words scorched my lips, but I could not give her Jupiter. I must take *her* money. We went down to the courtyard and there, beside Jupiter,

we held another conversation, as absurd, as foolish as the conversation in the *salôn*. I was wild with longing to say to her : “ You are an angel, I adore you ! ” And I said : “ The horse must be given twelve quarts of oats,” etc., etc. I committed astonishing absurdities. I told her, I remember now, that the horse needed a light weight, and that he would be happier with her than with me. I must have made a disastrous impression by such remarks. At last I departed with Picot ; my head was in such a whirl that I talked with Picot all the way home—just to talk about her. And my heart beat fast when Picot said : “ The pretty young lady looked at me in a way that made me think she recognized me. She certainly looked at me closely enough the day I went to draw out the *concierge*. It was she, *mon capitaine*, who was so good to the poor sick child.” ” ”

“ Good Picot ! In a way it was he who brought about our marriage.”

“ *Ma foi*, yes ; he was the first to tell me nice things about you.”

“ And I had no one to tell me nice things about you, and was beginning to love you notwithstanding ! Wait, you can judge for yourself.

“ ‘ Thursday, June 5th. Matters are advancing rapidly. *Mon dieu*, how is it going to end ? I have his horse. His name is Jupiter. He is in our stable,

between Nelly and Georges' pony. Let me try and set my distracted wits in order. How many things have happened to-day! After dinner Georges said to me: "Little sister, you know we are going to the photographer's at the fête to have Bob's picture taken." "You can go with mamma without me." "No, if you are not there Bob won't be quiet."

"I resigned myself to the inevitable, and we set out for the photographer's. Just as Bob was about to be posed I saw enter the tent—whom? Him!—and not alone. A lady was with him, young and very pretty. Who can this lady be? But there are two children. They call him uncle. She is his sister! Georges could not make Bob obey, so I was obliged to play a ridiculous part before *him*. I must have looked like a little idiot to him. I read Bob a lecture in English. I might have been showing off a trained dog. I made my escape, crimson with shame and confusion. I returned to the house, wretched, furious. I shut myself in my room. But at five o'clock I had to go down for tea.

"I went downstairs. I had hardly gotten down when Pierre brought in a card. "Who is it?" asked mamma. "A captain of chasseurs, madame." "A captain of chasseurs! I do not know any captain of chasseurs. I come to the country for rest and the house is invaded by soldiers! A colonel yesterday,

a captain to-day! We shall have the entire regiment to-morrow! What does the captain want?" "Madame, he said he had come about a horse." "Look at his card, Jeanne; but what is the matter with you? How red you are! Have you a rush of blood to the head?" "No, mamma." "Very well, then, look at the card and read it." I took the card and I read: "*Comte Roger de Léonelle, captain in the 21st chasseurs.*" Count! He is a count! That was the one thing needed! "Léonelle!" cried Georges. "Why, it is the officer with the horse for Jeanne." "True," said mamma; "that was the name the colonel mentioned yesterday. And your father is not here! However, we shall have to receive this gentleman. Show him in, Pierre. But you, Jeanne, will have to do the talking, because, as you know, I know nothing about horses."

"The door opened. It was he! He entered, bowed, and mamma, after a few words which were tolerably amiable but might have been more so, said to me: "Jeanne, it is about your horse, so make your arrangements with monsieur."

"So here we were, face to face. All the burden of the conversation fell upon me. As for him, he was charming, easy, tactful, and unaffected. And I—I was stupid, positively stupid. I felt dull, depressed, crushed. I will try and recall the conver-

sation, which must have given him a lamentable idea of me. There we were, seated a couple of paces from each other; I, fortunately, with my back to the light. "My colonel spoke to me this morning, mademoiselle, and told me that you were in search of a horse." "Yes, it is true, monsieur; papa is going to give me one for my birthday."

"The stupidity of it! What was the need of telling him that? It was because I could think of nothing, and in my confusion I said the first thing that entered my head. He went on: "I can place at your disposal a horse that I think will suit you perfectly." "Thank you, monsieur, but your colonel said yesterday that you were very fond of the horse and that you would not care to—" "*Mon dieu*, mademoiselle, he is an excellent horse, otherwise I should not think of offering him to you, but he is a trifle under weight for me; a light weight would suit him better."

"He was not telling the truth, for the colonel has ridden the horse and thought him perfect. And to carry the colonel! The colonel is no light weight! He is enormous!

"*A light weight will suit him better.* What a pretty speech, and so tactfully expressed. One must search carefully for the hidden meaning of those words. They meant: "You are light and

dainty, a feather, a bird !” “ Our work is very hard sometimes,” he added. “ The horse will be happier with you.”

“ *‘Happier with you !’*” He said it with a certain gentleness, almost tenderness. It was an indirect way of saying to me : “ No one could help being happy with you, not even a horse !”

“ “ Can any one imagine anything more ingenious, more delicate ? ” ”

Here Jeanne interrupted herself all at once :

“ So you were not aware of all the pretty things you said to me ? ”

“ No.”

“ But you thought them ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ That’s the principal thing. Now I’ll go on.”

“ ‘ And I, by way of thanks, answered baldly : “ Very well, monsieur, I agree. When can I try the horse ? ” “ I have brought him with me ; he is here, mademoiselle. I will leave him with you. You shall keep him on trial a week, two weeks, as long as you like ; one can’t try a horse too much.” ’ ”

“ Oh, monsieur, you are too kind ! I will ride the horse to-morrow and papa will let you know without delay.” “ No, mademoiselle, keep the horse at least three days before deciding. I shall not need him in the least.” “ Very well, as you wish, monsieur ; and I am very grateful to you.”

“‘He rose, bowed, and was about to leave, when suddenly mamma exclaimed : “Why, Jeanne, you have forgotten a very important point—the price of the horse.”

“‘Oh, I love mamma dearly, very dearly ; I love her with all my heart ; but really, for a quarter of a second—not more—I hated her ! And yet mamma was quite right. The horse might be worth four or five thousand francs, and, in that case, my finances would not have permitted me. But to have to discuss with him directly this miserable, vulgar question of money ! It made me shudder !

“‘I began to say : “It is true, monsieur. There is the question of price.”

“‘Fortunately he came to my rescue : “Oh ! mademoiselle, the horse is not high priced.” “Papa has given me only three thousand francs.” “Three thousand francs, mademoiselle ! The horse isn’t worth three thousand francs. I only paid nineteen hundred francs for him, and, when one disposes of a horse, one always expects to lose something.”

“‘Ah ! it was then that I said to myself : “He loves me ! he loves me ! He is ready to sell at a loss this horse that he is devoted to, for the sole pleasure of selling him to me.”

“‘And I answered in my confusion : “Oh, no

indeed ! You ought to make something of a profit.”
“ I shall be making a very large one, mademoiselle, if I have the happiness of serving you. If the horse suits you, I assure you that your father and I will readily agree as to the price.”

“ ‘ With that he made a sweeping bow to grand-mamma, mamma, to me, Georges, Bob, and everybody. He was on the point of leaving, but, on the threshold, he paused ; he certainly had difficulty in going.’ ”

“ Quite true.”

“ ‘ He said that he would like to give the coachman some instructions as to bridling the horse and the bit which suited him best. Then grandmamma—grandmamma was perfect ! But, dear me, grandmamma isn’t like mamma, she doesn’t hate the military. She was perfect. She said : “ Let us go down with monsieur, Jeanne ; we will look at the horse. Louis is probably in the courtyard.” ’ ”

“ ‘ We went down, grandmamma, Georges, Bob, he and I. The horse was there, held by a chasseur ; and on the horse’s back I saw a sidesaddle. The captain noticed my astonishment. “ I keep a sidesaddle for my sister,” he explained. “ She comes to Saint Germain sometimes, to ride with me, and as I wouldn’t for the world have anything happen to you, I had the horse taken to the *manège* awhile

ago and had my orderly try him under a side-saddle."

"I glanced at the orderly ; he was the *chasseur* I had seen talking with the *concierge* the day before. He recognized me, I recognized him. I grew scarlet. And the captain, he too flushed slightly. I think he understood that the orderly and I recognized each other.

"But that was nothing. The orderly spoke up and said : "The captain tried the horse also, with a blanket wrapped around him for a skirt. He wanted to see for himself."

"Then the captain grew so red and I so pale that the orderly stopped, fearing that he had said something imprudent.

"I was greatly moved and stammered : "Ah ! how good of you, monsieur, how very good of you !" "Quite natural, mademoiselle, quite natural !" he returned.

"And grandmamma, who is very shrewd, looked at us with eyes at once soft and piercing.

"Fortunately, Louis made his appearance. He had not been in the courtyard ; Georges had gone to look for him. Then in Louis' presence we had another scrap of conversation. I don't remember very well what we said. He told us that the horse would have to have a very light bit. I interrupted

him to say : " A pelham ?" He answered : " No, not a pelham, a very light bit." He advised a plain martingale or a sliding one, I don't remember which. Finally he carried his goodness so far as to give instructions as to the horse's food—so much oats, so much straw, so much hay. After which he bowed to us and was about to leave. I took a step toward him. He stopped. I wished to say something nice to him, but my feelings choked me, the words would not come. He waited and repeated : " Mademoiselle—mademoiselle." The situation was intolerable. I must speak at all cost. All I could think of was this : " Excuse me, monsieur, but what is the horse's name ?" " Jupiter, mademoiselle." " Thank you, monsieur." " Mademoiselle."

" And he took his leave with the *chasseur* who carried the sidesaddle on his shoulders. The soldier's name is Picot. Georges went into the stable with Louis. I was left alone with grandmamma. " Come and take a little turn in the garden with me, Jeanette," she said.

" Seated together there on a bench, she questioned me, and I told her all—*all*, that is to say *nothing*, because there is *nothing*, and yet this *nothing* is *something*. " Little girl, little girl," said grandmamma, " you mustn't begin to imagine—" " I'm not imagining anything, grandmamma ; I know very

well that is all accident, yes, accident. But please, not a word to mamma ; she would laugh at me and, besides, she is not like you ; she does not like military men."

"What ? I do, do I ?" "Yes, grandmamma, you like them, and I have often said to myself : ' I don't know, but it seems to me that it would rather please grandmamma if I were to marry an officer.' "

"We returned to the house. "So here you are at last," said mamma. "Now tell me what has been happening. It seems that the courtyard was filled with soldiers." "By no means, mamma, there were only this gentleman and his orderly !" "His orderly ! You use the language of the barracks." "Mamma, it is a word I have just heard." "He seemed to be perfectly well-bred," said mamma, "and perhaps you did not notice in reading his card—he is a count." "A count ?" "Yes, look." "I had not noticed."

"Could any one fib more outrageously ! Mamma was greatly mollified. My poor, dear mother is admirable, but she has a little weakness. She would be charmed if I were to become a marquise or a countess. As for me, I don't attach much importance to such things. It is very certain that it would not make me love any one I did not love. But it would not prevent my loving any one I did love.' "

“Have you finished?”

“Yes, and I think there is quite enough for one day. It’s your turn now.”

“‘Friday, June 6th. I must be cautious. I will not go into the forest or on the terrace. I will wait.’”

“‘Friday, June 6th. I rode Jupiter this morning and I do not think I rode him at all badly. He is a marvel! Grandmamma was still sleeping when I started out; when I came back, I went into her room to say good morning. She was writing. She had not heard me open the door. I wished to surprise her and crept up on tiptoe.’”

“It’s a habit of yours, it seems.”

“‘Grandmamma was writing a letter, which began with these words: *My dear General*. That is all I saw. Grandmamma hid the letter at once. I remember that grandmamma knows a general who has a high position in the War Office. But why was grandmamma writing him this morning? And above all, why did she conceal her letter? After dinner, we talked about the horse; papa is to wait until the noon train and is going to see M. de Léonelle in the morning.

“‘The door opened. It was the colonel, and naturally we talked about the horse again and the projected visit to-morrow. Papa said that waiting

until noon interfered somewhat with his business. "Don't put yourself out in the least," said the colonel; "I will see M. de Léonelle and will arrange the matter. The price will be nineteen hundred francs. You understand that M. de Léonelle does not wish to make it a matter of business. He saw that I knew you; he was eager to seize an opportunity of being agreeable to his colonel. Now you might show him some little courtesy and invite him to dinner in a couple of weeks or so. Very likely he will refuse; he is a hermit, a savage. He goes nowhere; he shuts himself up in the evening to work, of his own choice, for pleasure."

"Matters were thus arranged. Will he refuse? I do not believe so. And was it only to be agreeable to his colonel? I don't believe that either."

"Saturday, June 7th. We dismounted in the courtyard at quarters. The colonel came to me and thanked me for my kindness; he thinks that it was on his account that I consented. The question of price was settled in a few words, and the colonel said in conclusion: "I think that you will be invited to dinner in a couple of weeks, but don't be afraid; you can refuse. I told them you were a hermit, a savage." "But, *mon colonel*—" "Is it not true? You refuse all invitations." "I may not refuse this one, *mon colonel*." "What, what! Have I been

mistaken? You sell at cost price a horse that is worth at least three thousand francs, and with which you vowed awhile ago you would never part. Eh! eh! the little blonde has pretty eyes.” “Yes, *mon colonel*; I admit that I think her charming!”

“The word escaped me. The pleasure of talking of her! It was hard to have Picot for sole confidant.

“Here the colonel was called upon to hear the Saturday’s report. While the *chef d’escadrons* for the week gave account of the important events of the previous evening—*such and such a mare was kicked, such a man was absent at evening roll call, such and such a horse was bitten, etc., etc.*—the colonel looked at me with a bantering air as he twirled his heavy gray mustache. He went away at the conclusion of the report, and as he passed close to me he said: “Look at the young savage who is in a fair way to be tamed, who sells his horse—for love!”

“The colonel is an excellent man, but an outrageous gossip. My secret will soon be the secret of the entire regiment.”

“Saturday, June 7th. It is dreadful! I saw him last night in my dreams. So I have come to this! If M. Gambetta was also mixed up in the dream it was because he was the subject of conversation all through dinner.

““He was general-in-chief—not M. Gambetta; no, M. de Léonelle. He was in command of the whole French army; he had won a great victory. M. Gambetta came to him and said: “You have been Bonaparte; be Napoleon.”

““M. Gambetta tried to place a crown on his head, but he answered, with charming modesty: “No, no; Bonaparte is enough. I care nothing for Napoleon.”

““And M. Gambetta answered: “It suits me just as well; I shall remain in power.”

““How silly dreams are, and how silly it is to write such things!

““During the day I rode Jupiter. He is still a marvel. *He* did not appear—out of discretion, I am sure. In the evening, reappearance of the colonel. On hearing him announced mamma made a little grimace, which meant, “What, that officer again!”

““The colonel told us that the question of Jupiter was settled for nineteen hundred francs. And then I saw him maneuvering to get papa away to smoke a cigar in the garden. A quarter of an hour passed, mamma grew impatient. “What can your father have to say to this colonel? He will catch cold; he is bareheaded. Take out a hat to him and try to bring him in with you.” “Yes, mamma.”

“‘I reached the garden. I heard the colonel say: “*A pearl, I tell you, a pearl.*” And then: “*Hush! Take care!*” They changed the conversation. Ah, it is too much! Has he already proposed for my hand *hierararchically*, through his colonel? Is that the way things are done in the cavalry? It was going somewhat rapidly, after a single interview in which nothing was talked of but hay and oats and straw!

“‘The colonel and papa returned to the sal  n. The colonel took his leave. Papa wore a pre-occupied air. When I kissed him good-night at eleven o’clock, before going to my room, he took both my hands and said to me: “You are satisfied with this gentleman’s horse?” “Oh! yes, papa. If you only knew how I adore my dear Jupiter! I adore him!”

“‘I think I must have said it with too much enthusiasm, too much passion. I am afraid of betraying myself at every turn. When I speak of his horse, I seem to be speaking of him! And the *pearl*, which is the *pearl*? He or I?”

“‘Sunday, June 8th. This morning I received from my sister the following letter: “I have done all I can. I have paid forty visits during the past two days. I managed to slip into the conversation this little question: ‘Do you happen to know a

family called Lablinière?" I received five or six answers, all extremely satisfactory. Delightful people. Plenty of money, which never does any harm, and money very correctly made. As to the young girl, the cry is universal: "She is an angel!" So go ahead, *mon capitaine*, if your heart tells you to."

"I am astounded! So it can be seen that I am in love? My sister has noticed it. At six o'clock comes a note from the father. I am invited to dinner next Wednesday, the 11th. The colonel said: *In two weeks*. Must I answer at once? No, to-morrow will do.'"

"Sunday, June 8th. I came down early this morning. The postman had just passed. There was a pile of letters on the salver in the hall. Was there one for me? No, but there was one for grandmamma. An official letter with a large, red seal; on the seal I read: *Republic of France, War Office*. To think that my fate is there in that envelope! For I am sure that grandmamma has been making inquiries. A servant came by. I fled like a thief. Ten o'clock—grandmamma ought to be awake. She must have read her letter. I went up to her room. "Is that you, little one!" She seemed very gay; she kissed me tenderly, even more tenderly than usual. She was well pleased! It

was easy to see that if only by the way she kissed me this morning. The general's letter had pleased her.

“‘It is Sunday to-day, so papa has not gone to Paris. After breakfast grandmamma said to him: “I would like to have a talk with you.” “And I with you.”’

“‘They went into the smoking-room together. Why did grandmamma go into the smoking-room? I’ll wager she read papa the general’s letter.

“‘Grandmamma is patriotic. I have often heard her say that there is no more noble career than that of the army, and that the mothers who, out of selfishness, prevent their daughters marrying soldiers, are very wrong. Grandmamma has a horror of those young gentlemen whose only merit consists in killing a great many pigeons in the spring and a great many pheasants in the autumn; while mamma has a secret fondness for young men who make no use of their ten fingers other than to slaughter the said pigeons and pheasants. Mamma and grandmamma are forever quarreling on this point.

“‘The day came to an end at last. Halfway through dinner papa said carelessly: “That young officer has really been very obliging; I have invited him to dinner for next Wednesday.” “Wednesday!”

exclaimed mamma. "Why such haste? Do you intend to have all these soldiers here? This one is charming, I admit, but he will bring others. Our house will be turned into a barracks."'"

"Monday, June 9th. I am growing stupid. I took an hour this morning to write the eight short lines of my note of acceptance. I wrote it over ten, twenty times, and scarcely had my letter gone when I remembered that I had used the word *pleasure* twice in that unfortunate composition.'"

"Monday, June 9th. He has accepted! We were at breakfast; the windows of the dining-room overlook the courtyard. Suddenly mamma exclaimed: "Well! there is another soldier prowling about in the courtyard."

"I looked and the exclamation escaped me: "Ah, it is Picot!"

"You should have seen mamma, you should have heard her! This was the last straw. Here was Jeanne familiar with the names of all these soldiers! "Of only one, mamma, only one. It was he who brought Jupiter the other day."

"Grandmamma was seized with a wild fit of laughter. How gay grandmamma is! She was singing on the stairs this morning. The report the general sent her must have been a good one indeed! After breakfast I took possession of *his* letter.

How well it was written and how simply ! Here it is in full : “ Monsieur, I have received the invitation for Wednesday, the 11th of June, with which you have honored me. I accept with the greatest pleasure and the greatest gratitude. I have learned with much pleasure that mademoiselle, your daughter, is pleased with the horse. Accept, monsieur, the assurance of my respect.”

“ ‘ I am sure it was with a purpose that he repeated the word *pleasure*. He knew that I should see his letter. He wished to lay particular stress on that idea.’ ”

“ ‘ Tuesday, June 10th. I dine at her house to-morrow.’ ”

“ ‘ Tuesday, June 10th. He dines here to-morrow.’ And now we come to the eventful day of the dinner. You read the account of the dinner.”

“ Take my advice, my Jeanette, let us stop here for to-night. And besides, just see what time it is.”

“ Why, two o’clock in the morning ! ”

“ Yes, two o’clock in the morning ! Reason enough for stopping. It is not the only one. I fear that from now on our entries will be terribly monotonous. Love, love, always love ! That is all there will be in mine at least.”

“ And in mine too.”

“ And love like everybody’s ; love with the liberty

to see each other, love with the liberty to speak to each other. As soon as I was able to see you close too, what merit was there in seeing you as you were, as you are, that is to say the loveliest and best of women! What was the merit in loving you! No, the rare and delightful part of our romance was its beginning. We loved each other with a sort of instinct, at a distance, at first sight, without needing to know or to speak to each other. I read your soul at once through your eyes. Between the 11th of June, the day of the dinner, and the 17th of August, the day of our wedding, we exchanged words innumerable; we said many sweet and tender things to each other, but never, Jeanette, never did we have a more tender, more passionate conversation than that absurd dialogue before Louis and Picot, in the courtyard near the stables. I knew that day that my fate was sealed. I left the little courtyard on the Rue des Arcades with the conviction that you would be mine and that my entire life would be spent in trying to make you happy. It is two years since then. Have I succeeded so far, my darling?"

"Oh! Yes, *mon ami*. Oh, yes!"

She was no longer on the footstool. She was on his knee. And they put aside the little books and read no more that night.

THE END.

MADAME DE CHATEAUBRUN'S
SERIES OF THREE.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

LUDOVIC HALEVY.

TRANSLATED BY

ANNIE W. AYER AND HELEN T. SLATE.

Madame de Chateaubrun's Series of Three.

MARCELLE DE CHATEAUBRUN TO LEOPOLDINE DE SAINT
D'ANICHE.

PARIS, Sept. 18, 1880.

Ah, my dear, you who have a genius for organization, come to my aid. I am in such a dilemma. I cannot arrange my invitations for the autumn. You know my system: A series of three—October, November, December—from fifteen to twenty people at a time. You, my best friend, are to be in the last two; you should be in all three if you cared to be, but you would not care to be in the first. It is monseigneur's set—a somewhat solemn and sober set—and that alarms you.

I can hear you say: "What in the world is that absurd Marcelle worrying about now? Why doesn't she simply repeat her series of the year before?"

My series of the year before! Alas! my series of the year before won't answer at all. Listen. Let us examine them together—but to do this I must

send you the three lists complete. You could never grasp the situation otherwise.

FIRST SET.

Monseigneur and his secretary, l'Abbe Lepetit; the prefect and his wife; Fromentin, the *procureur général*, and Madame Fromentin; Marcillat, the deputy, and Madame Marcillat; Lambertin, the academician; my brother and my sister-in-law; Madame de Blossanville and her three daughters; Roger de Carlemont; my Aunt de Brigas and her companion, Mademoiselle Monette; Louise de Landriane. Total, eighteen.

SECOND SET.

Monsieur and Madame de Senermont and the little Senermont; Monsieur and Madame de Martinville and young Martinville; Robert de Bissy, my cousin, the captain; Monsieur and Madame de Loubersan; Paul de Mennessy; Madame de Blandignac; my two old maid cousins De Meslay; Montloubel, Gironville and Saint Branchu, and you, my dear. Total, seventeen.

THIRD SET.

You again; Madame de Kérestang, the little Kérestang and young Kérestang; Monsieur and

Madame de Montagny ; Chautenay, Langlade and D'Estillac ; Monsieur and Madame de Montbrays ; Monsieur and Madame Planès de Waldeck ; Robert de Malgane ; Madame de Sommery ; Pierre and Christine de Charmelieu ; Chapelan, our old notary. Total, eighteen.

Now let us proceed in order. Let us examine the first lot. Last year it was the religious set, administrative and literary—somewhat pompous, somewhat stiff, a little tiresome even. But it isn't a bad thing to be bored now and then ; you enjoy yourself so much better afterward. Every evening Lambertin used to favor us with a short literary *séance*. When one has an academician one must make use of him. My sister-in-law used to answer him. As you know, she is a thorough pedant. This was a delight to monseigneur. He often condescended to say to me : “ Your salôn, dear madame, is the last in the world for gossip.” Well, my dear, my first set is altogether impossible.

The prefect and his wife, Monsieur and Madame de Fromentin. Fromentin is the *procureur général*. Do you know what they have done, or rather, what they have not done—the prefect and the *procureur général* ? They have not sent in their resignations ! They have carried out the decrees of the 29th of March ! After such acts I cannot dream

of bringing them into monseigneur's presence—I cannot dream of inviting them at all. It is a hole with four openings; I can stop half the hole with two dear little right-minded deputies who bravely sent in their resignations. This will be very agreeable to monseigneur; he intends, moreover, to find rich wives for these young gentlemen. They certainly deserve some compensation. A fine thing for an ex-magistrate to marry into our world!

Monsieur and Madame de Marcillat, more or less in the same position. Marcillat is our deputy. He belongs to the left center—he voted for Article 7. He voted for it against his will, but, still, he voted for it. If he had only abstained! Two names more to erase.

And what will become of monseigneur's whist? Last year, I had the Fromentins and Marcillats. My whist is broken up. Monseigneur belongs to the old school, he does not play dummy. He knows only the four-handed game. The two little deputies play whist. I made inquiries. The nice little fellows are perfect, but I have no fourth. Where to find a fourth?

True, I have one resource—our good old curé—but the poor dear man isn't rolling in wealth. We should have to make the game a sou a point. Monseigneur would submit with angelic sweetness

but not without secret regret. He is not averse to a little excitement in the way of betting. Forty a point is his game, and when he has won two or three hundred francs, monseigneur is quite elated. Very excusable joy! All the more for his poor.

Monsieur and Madame de Blerny-Bussac. They can still be invited, but they cannot be invited with monseigneur. There is a fatality in it! There is no one I can ask with monseigneur. He made the match between them two years ago and it has turned out badly. That little booby of a Blerny-Bussac has taken to gambling; he has already squandered all his own fortune and half of his wife's dot. The poor child is very unhappy. She is counting on being one of the first set. She has written to ask me. "It will comfort me to cry in monseigneur's arms," she writes; "and perhaps he will lecture *Gaëtan* a little."

Lecture *Gaëtan*! A nice diversion for monseigneur! His grace comes to Chateaubrun to enjoy himself, to rest after his pastoral round. It would weary him to death to have the child weep in his arms. Besides, I know monseigneur—he is not fond of having to face those of his matches that have proved unfortunate.

I shall put the Blerny-Bussacs in the third series, although Chautenay is to make one. He is an

inveterate gambler, and he and Blerny-Bussac will spend their nights playing bezique, but I would rather have that than offend monseigneur.

Lambertin can remain. He voted on the right side in the last elections at the academy. Monseigneur will see him again with pleasure, but Lambertin must have an audience. One cannot shine without an audience, and I see no prospect of an audience for Lambertin. He will not have his former crony, my sister-in-law; two more names to strike out—my brother's and my sister-in-law's. We have quarreled, quarreled hopelessly. You know why—about our Aunt Marceline's will. They displayed such avarice. I will never see them again as long as I live.

Lambertin will have Madame de Blossanville and her three daughters. But the general's wife is frightfully deaf, and her three daughters spend their days in playing croquet, are ready to drop with sleep on leaving the dinner table and ask permission to retire at nine o'clock.

Roger de Carlemont, also to be struck out. If I placed him in my first series last year, it was in the hope of making him marry one of the general's daughters. I am sorry for the poor woman with her string of daughters to dispose of. I did not say anything to Carlemont—he would not have

come if I had—but this year he suspected. He made me give him my word of honor that I would not indulge in a similar pleasantry, and he asked to be one of the third set. It is the set where one enjoys oneself. They all want to be in it this year. Ah, my dear, how frivolous this country is growing; people don't know how to be bored, nowadays.

My Aunt de Brigas and her companion, Mademoiselle Monette. Well! here too I am not altogether at ease. My aunt is a Catholic, but—how shall I express it?—a trifle old-fashioned. She cannot become accustomed to the devout novelties in the Church—and last year she and monseigneur had a terrible squabble over the pilgrimages to Lourdes. They parted coldly. However, this year the decrees of the 29th of March will reconcile them. This is the one sure result of the decrees. They have reconciled all the Catholics. This thought is too deep to be mine; it is my husband's, who sends you his respects. Poor Adrien! He is very dejected this year—no game, and last year at this time he had shot more than fifteen hundred birds.

Louise de Landriane. I must certainly put her in the third series. Louise is to be married again—it is still a secret—to D'Estillac. I cannot change him about—he is second comedian in my troupe, and you will see that my poor little troupe is sorely tried.

So, for my first set there are left only Monseigneur l'Abbe Lepetit, the two little deputies, Lambertin, Madame de Blossanville and her three daughters, my Aunt de Brigas, Mademoiselle Monette, Adrien and myself. Thirteen! And monseigneur is superstitious. L'Abbe Lepetit very tactfully warned me. "The greatest saints have their weakness," he said to me; "monseigneur has a horror of number thirteen."

I shall be obliged to have my little Jeanne at table. There will be nothing to prevent. In monseigneur's set, the conversation is usually decorous. We make up for lost time when he has gone.

Now I come to the second of the series. This is the shooting set, my husband's set. It opened last year with the Senermonts and the Martinvelles. I brought them together in the hope of marrying the little Senermont to young Martinvelle. It couldn't be managed. Young Martinvelle thought Cyprienne too thin. He wants a somewhat more—ample wife. So this year I am making a change. I am going to put the Kérestangs (of the third) in the place of the Senermonts (of the second). The Martinvelles I shall leave in the second. The little Kérestang is plump. Perhaps she may suit young Martinvelle. The Kérestangs have more money than the Senermonts. That is the main thing with the Martinvelles.

Robert de Bissey, my cousin, the captain. He was the soul of the shooting party and we shall not have him this year. He used to be on the staff and was always free. There has been some sort of a fuss in the War Office. Robert is now in a dreadful regiment of dragoons, at the other end of France, and not a shadow of liberty. The people who govern us do nothing but invent ways of annoying us.

Now we come to the Loubersans and Paul de Mennessy. Oh, my dear, here, here is the real tragedy—but I will keep that for the last. Altogether there are three inveterate sportsmen left for my husband: Montloubel, Gironville and Saint Branchu. They are all he needs for a season when there is no game, and, besides, it would not matter so very much if this set should happen to drag a little.

But the third of the series is quite another matter. The third set is my set—comedies and charades—I am theatrical manager. I positively cannot do without my theatrical troupe. Malgane, my leading man; D'Estillac, my first comedian; Montagny, my second comedian; Chapelan, the noble father, and Madame de Sommery, the duenna. The leading lady is myself, your humble servant.

Well, my dear, I begin by having no duenna. It was Madame de Sommery, that excellent baroness,

who did not disdain to appear on our little stage in spite of her extreme piety. She never played in any but the most innocent pieces, however. She was content to look on at the others. There is a very appreciable difference. Madame de Sommery was divine in prominent rôles. She brought into them a grand air and an atmosphere of ancient tradition.

We shall not have her this year. She cannot stir away from home. Do you know what she has done? An admirable thing! She received thirty-one Jesuits at Sommery; she was obliged to send away eleven because the prefect told her that there was a law against having more than twenty Jesuits at one's house. But she still has twenty left. The poor woman has no time to think of playing comedy.

I felt like writing to her: "Come with your twenty Jesuits. We can turn the library into a dormitory for them." But, really, twenty Jesuits to distract, console and feed, was too much of an undertaking. And this is why I have no duenna.

I am equally unfortunate in my second comedian, Montagny. He served his twenty-eight days last month. It rained in torrents all the time and he came back with bronchitis, laryngitis—I don't know what. He is seriously ill. He is going away; he

is to spend the winter in the south and will not return until next spring. I hope to extricate myself from the tangle by re-inviting one of the little deputies. I am told that he played "*Ma Femme et mon Parapluie*" at his president's last spring and that he was not at all bad as Serinet. He plays whist, he acts, he protests against the decrees of the 29th of March! He is an accomplished young man! What a loss to the magistracy!

Alas! Here I come to the great, the insurmountable difficulty. Here I lose my head completely and do not know which way to turn. Just listen, and read this part of my lesson with the closest attention.

Yesterday Mathilde de Loubersan came to see me. She had evidently been watching for me on my way through Paris. I am to be here only three days between Trouville and Chateaubrun. I had not notified any one of my arrival. My time was all taken. Three days are none too much in which to *re-stock* oneself with hats and gowns for the season.

Well, to go back to yesterday. I had just been having a five hours' consultation with my dress-maker. I had some enchanting ideas. You shall see a certain *cérise* gown and a buttercup coat. I had come back exhausted. I found Mathilde. She

had been waiting two hours for me. We began to chat, but she was distrait. I could see that she had something to say to me and that this something was not easy to say. At last she came to the point. She asked me to change her to another set. To tell the truth, I expected as much. You know what is going on. They say that M. de Malgane has taken M. de Mennessy's place in Mathilde's heart, and Mathilde is not anxious to meet M. de Mennessy. She, too, wishes to be in the third set, M. de Malgane's set.

Mon dieu! My dear, this is a very delicate question, and my conscience troubles me when I think of certain arrangements. But what is one to do? When one wishes to have a salôn one must make allowances, shut one's eyes to many things. One could not have any one, otherwise. And, besides, why this persistence in seeing bad in everything? For two or three years Mathilde has taken pleasure in meeting M. de Mennessy in society. And now she finds pleasure in meeting M. de Malgane. Why need there be anything in it other than purely intellectual enjoyment? *Ma foi*, I said to Mathilde:

"I will put you in the third set, in M. de Malgane's set."

"Oh, I don't ask that," she said with a smile. "I

only ask not to be in the same set as M. de Mennessy. That is all."

She kissed me affectionately and took her leave. You think this is all? By no means; it is just beginning.

Five minutes later, another visitor. It was Loubersan. First the wife, then the husband. He must have been on the lookout for me, too, and I think he must have also been on the lookout for Mathilde's departure so as not to meet her in my presence. He seemed embarrassed and it was only after much circumlocution that he made up his mind to explain his errand. He had come to ask me not to change him to another set but to leave him in the second with M. de Mennessy.

"I should like very much," he said, "to pass those three weeks at your house with Mennessy. I am sincerely fond of him. For the last five or six months, the most unaccountable change has taken place in him. He has grown cold, indifferent. He does not come to see us any more—and, you know, he was always at our house; he used to dine with us two or three times a week in the winter; in the spring he went with us to Dieppe. He has deserted us completely. To be sure it is somewhat Mathilde's fault—you know her. She is capricious, changeable; she has whims, fancies. She is infatuated with

that Malgane, who is a fool, a man without intellect, without resources. Ah, if you must invite Malgane, don't put us in the same set. You have no idea of it, have you?"

"*Mon dieu !*" I answered. "I haven't arranged things yet."

"Not with Malgane, I beg of you, but with Mennessy. I used to like the ungrateful fellow who has deserted me, and I like him still—so much that I go to the club to see him—yes, to see him, for, you know, I don't care for the club. I am a home man. It is understood, is it not? You will place us in the second set with Mennessy as you did last year. I shall have him at close quarters there, he cannot escape me and I shall force them to make up—Mathilde and him. Accept my thanks beforehand."

He was gone—and I, I was left alone with my despair. I have been seeking a solution ever since, but I can find none. It's a regular Chinese puzzle.

Suppose I were to leave it all to chance, entirely to chance—write the names of each guest on a bit of paper, place the slips in a hat, shake them up and let chance decide once for all.

Yes, but suppose monseigneur should fall into the set where we amuse ourselves. Oh, well, after all it would divert his mind; it would make him forget

for a time the sorrows of the church. And, then, an episcopal blessing accompanied by a general absolution would not be *de trop* after our gayeties in the third set!

I am jesting, *ma mignonne*, and I don't feel a bit like it. What is to be done? What—what?

Yours,

MARCELLE.

LEOPOLDINE DE SAINT D'ANICHE TO MARCELLE CHATEAUBRUN.

SAINT D'ANICHE, Sept. 21, 1880.

Your letter, dear, contains four little words that went straight to my heart: *You, my best friend*.

Yes, you are right. I am your best friend and I am going to prove it.

You have, in all, only three great difficulties to face:

First: No fourth for monseigneur's whist.

Second: No duenna for the theatricals in the third set.

Third: The Loubersan-Malgane-Mennessy question.

The whist and the duenna I take upon myself. I am going to sacrifice myself, I am going to be heroic. This year I will be in all three sets. I play whist very badly, but, nevertheless, I play. I will make

the fourth for monseigneur. Beware of revokes! But his grace has a magnanimous soul. He will forgive me.

Besides, these three weeks spent in monseigneur's society will do me good. The state of my soul troubles me at times. I shall undoubtedly find a moment now and then to talk with monseigneur about it.

As for the duenna parts, send them to me at once. I will learn them. I will paint wrinkles on my face. I will wear white hair. I will be a hundred years old. It does not alarm me. I am sure I shall be a very seductive old lady. I wore powder last year at the princess' ball. Every one told me I was bewitching and I had no difficulty in believing it. Besides, it is much better to play the old woman when one is young than to play the young girl when one is old. As for the Loubersan-Mennessy-Malgane affair, there would be one easy, simple, decisive solution. Put Loubersan in the second set with Mennessy, and Mathilde in the third set with Malgane. He would have Mennessy! She would have Malgane! It would be perfection!

Doubtless, but this solution is too bold, too radical.

One must consider public opinion. And what would the moralists say?

Indeed, I see but one arrangement. I do not say it is altogether satisfactory, but it is possible. Put all four into the same set. Each will have what he wants. Let them get out of the muddle as best they may.

Yours,

LEOPOLDINE.

THE DEPUTY OF GAMACHE.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

LUDOVIC HALEVY.

TRANSLATED BY

ANNIE W. AYER AND HELEN T. SLATE.

THE DEPUTY OF GAMACHE.

MONTARNESSE, June 13, 1870.

It is done, my dear uncle, it is done. Yesterday, the twelfth of June, I was elected *conseiller général*; it was a hard fight: seventy-five majority, not more. I had two opponents. But we will speak of my election later on. Let us speak now of the thirty thousand francs that I asked of you day before yesterday, and the reply that you made to my letter. You wrote me that you were short of money; that I already owed you a considerable sum; that, moreover, I was falling into the habit of drawing upon you with a little too much freedom.

Short of money you are not; I am familiar with your affairs: you are rich, very rich, and your money box is a veritable galleon laden with gold. So, if you please, we will let that pass.

I owe you money, quite right. My debt amounts to some fifty thousand francs, I think; but if I have drawn upon you with more or less freedom, and if I

turn to you again for these thirty thousand francs, it was you, my dear uncle, who got me into the scrape. And what a scrape!

Will you allow me to recall briefly the past?

One evening—some six years ago—on leaving the Opera, you read me a long lecture; we walked for two hours from the Rue de la Paix to the Madeleine, and from the Madeleine to the Rue de la Paix, and, during these two hours, my dear uncle, you talked with much force and eloquence. I was making a mess of my life, I was throwing away my fortune, and I would end some fine day, by blindly ruining myself for some woman.

In reply to this, I retorted that I was neither on the way nor in the humor to ruin myself for any one of these young persons. I made no attempt to deny that they openly disputed over and shared my income, but only my income; the capital was intact, perfectly intact.

Then it was, my dear uncle, that you hit upon the decisive argument.

“Does it amuse you?” you said. “Do you get your money’s worth?”

I had to confess that I was beginning to be prodigiously bored.

“Marry then, marry. A pretty wife and pretty babies—alarming things, truly! You will make

an excellent father. You will come home with your pockets full of bonbons and playthings. And you will discover that to give a toy worth twenty-five sous to a little man who loves you with all his heart, is much more amusing than to give earrings worth twenty-five thousand francs to a young person who ridicules you behind your back. Marry! Marry!"

"Marry—but, uncle, whom?"

"Whom? I have the very one for you. I have a treasure. I have Caroline."

The next day I allowed myself to be dragged to Madame de Sylvanès', and there you showed me Caroline! You will do me this justice, uncle, that I immediately showed a violent disposition to marry Caroline. Ah! it was because there was nothing, is nothing prettier, more charming, more adorable than Caroline!

Two months later I married her! The contract, the dot, all the arrangements you attended to; as for me, I attended to nothing but lovemaking. You said to me: "You know that Caroline is rich." I did not answer: "So much the worse, I should have preferred she were poor, so as to make her rich." No, but I said to you: "If she has money, so much the better; but if she hadn't a sou I would marry her just the same."

So, here I was married, and I set about loving

Caroline with all my heart. Yesterday, I read somewhere one of M. de Talleyrand's sayings, which with a slight alteration applies marvelously well to my case.

He was asked how, after having loved Madame de Staël, he could love Madame Grand, and M. de Talleyrand answered: One must have loved a clever woman to appreciate the joy of loving a stupid one."

And I say: "One must have loved a great many *farceuses* to appreciate the joy of loving a good little woman who is altogether yours—especially when this good little woman is prettier than all the others put together."

I was, therefore, perfectly happy, and I was very grateful to you, my dear uncle, for having brought this happiness to me, for advising me to marry, and for showing me Caroline. But I soon began to realize that I was spending a little too much money. You had said to me: "Caroline is rich." So she was, having brought with her a dot of half a million and a pretty chateau in Bourgogne. But it came to pass that the pretty chateau very soon swallowed up two-thirds of the interest on the half million. The park had to be kept up and the preserves well stocked. You do not know what pheasants cost!

This left some ten thousand francs, and my first

care was to authorize Caroline to spend four times as much for ribbons and laces. Caroline, who is very sensible and orderly, managed to get on with her forty thousand francs and did not run a sou in debt, which is most praiseworthy; but I, for my part, indulged in some little outlay in honor of Caroline. It seemed strictly proper to me to do things on at least as large a scale as before. I have always liked to give, and besides, I said to myself:

“The diamonds that I give to Caroline will not be like the diamonds I gave to Pichenette—they will not go out of the family.” And so convinced was I of this, that every time I was imprudent enough to wander near the Rue de la Paix, I never went home without a little case of blue velvet in my pocket.

This is not all, however, there are the babies. Shall I be frank, perfectly frank? Well, the truth is that I was a little afraid of them. I said to myself: “When they are small they cry, they scream, they smash things—and then, when they grow up, one has to pay the young men’s debts, and provide dotes for the daughters.”

In short, I was uneasy; but the first baby came, so pretty, so pink, so droll, that Caroline and I immediately began to wish for another, and for a third after the second. Three babies! This is all; but who knows? Perhaps, all may not be said yet.

I adore my three monkeys, but they cost me a pretty penny : nurses, English governesses, an omnibus to take about the nurses and children, a goat carriage for the little girls, and a tiny Irish pony for M. Antoine, your godson, and my eldest.

Once more, my dear uncle, I am not complaining. There is not a happier husband and father than I am, and happiness is well worth paying for, but I continue to make observations and I have come to this conclusion, that married for good to a rich woman who gives you children, one spends more money, much more, than married *pour de rire* to women who are not rich but who do not give you children.

These then, from the financial standpoint—I am only looking into the question of money—these then are the results of your first piece of advice : *marriage*.

Let us pass on, now, to the second : *politics*.

One evening, eighteen months ago—it was in September, 1868—we were peacefully taking our after-dinner coffee on the terrace of the chateau, when a large, square envelope with a red seal was brought to me, *departement de —, cabinet du préfet*. I was appointed mayor of my village.

This honor fell from the skies ; they had played me this evil trick without consulting me. This is

what had taken place. The mayor, my predecessor, had quarreled with the majority of his municipal council, and had been obliged to send in his resignation. Immediately all the inhabitants of the commune—all, all, without exception—had united in begging the prefect to clothe me with the municipal powers and insignia.

And all this on account of Caroline, who had managed to make herself adored throughout the country; she was in herself the bureau of charities of the commune, and I have had to place a special amount to her credit for her poor. One more expense, my dear uncle, one more expense!

In celebration of my accession, and out of gratitude to my townsfolk, I threw open the park gates on the following Sunday and gave a grand fête: sack races, crowning of a *rosière*,* a ball, and a banquet. Then began the toasts. Great enthusiasm. “*Vive M. le Maire! vive Mme. Caroline! vive l'oncle de Mme. Caroline!*”

At midnight, when the last quadrille was over and the lanterns went out one by one among the trees, we three, you, Caroline, and I, remained leaning over one of the balustrades of the chateau. On all sides one could see lights coming and going;

* A young girl who has obtained a rose for good conduct.

they were the lanterns carried by my guests on their homeward way ; one could still hear in the distance cries, songs, and shouts of "*vive M. le Maire !*"

It is at this point that your memory must be particularly good, my dear uncle, and help you to recall our conversation. It decided my life.

"Ah," you said to me, "you are a great favorite in the place."

"It is not I, it is Caroline ; she is always scouring the country in search of the poor and sick."

"She or you, it matters little. You are both favorites, if it pleases you better ; well, doesn't this give you ideas?"

"What ideas, uncle?"

"Why, in 1869, there will be elections for the legislature—if you were to present yourself——"

"Present myself, I ! Let Caroline present herself, if it will amuse her ; but as for me, never !"

"I am in earnest and I say again : you ought to present yourself. This would give you an interest in life ; and, besides, what will become of France if decent people do not have some hand in things, if politics are abandoned to lawyers and journalists ? The provincial spirit that used to be the soul of ancient France ought to be revived in this country. The Chamber is in great need of new blood, etc., etc."

To all these most wise and weighty remarks, my only answer was, I remember, a very hearty and disrespectful burst of laughter: "I a deputy!" I could think of nothing more preposterous.

Caroline, however, did not smile and at once sided with you.

"Your uncle is right," she said; "why shouldn't you be a deputy as well as any one? I am sure you would cut as good and better a figure in the Chamber as MM. so and so. Present yourself, *mon ami*, present yourself."

We remained talking over this fine project until two o'clock in the morning. When one begins to talk politics one never knows when to stop.

The next morning you left us to return to Paris, but I have always thought that you did not go direct to Paris but waited to do a little electioneering in the neighborhood.

During the week that succeeded your departure, there came to the chateau a procession of people who had never set foot there before, all of whom pelted me with the same words: "You must present yourself for the elections of 1869."

They then proceeded to enter into details: the official candidate had been worn threadbare, they needed an independent candidate, one who had ties in the country, etc., etc. I had great difficulty

at first to keep from laughing, but, little by little, I grew accustomed to listening to things that, on the whole, were not unflattering; and, at the end of one short month, I had reached the point of standing before the glass and repeating to myself Caroline's words: "Why shouldn't you be a deputy as well as any one else?"

The first of January we returned to Paris. Up to the very last day I had said: *no*—but it was not an energetic and decided *no* like the first.

The month of April arrived, and with it a deputation of the electors of the district. I was forced to declare myself. I weakened, hesitated; Caroline had said to me: "Accept." And I accepted.

My electoral committee was immediately organized, with president, vice-president, and secretaries. As soon as twenty people unite for no matter what purpose, they elect a president, a vice-president, and secretaries. I at once opened an account—a first account!—for printing, rooms, minor expenses, etc., etc. Then my committee took possession of me, conducted me to the field of battle, and did not let me go again. I became a parcel, a bundle. They packed me up, unpacked me, exhibited me, made me speak, made me keep silent, made me drink, made me eat; then they packed me up again and carried

me off, to unpack me an hour later on another fair-ground.

They said to me: "Stand up, bow, shake hands, give a toast, that is right, that will do, sit down again, eat, drink, you have not drunk enough, you must have the air of a *bon vivant*, make your little speech, etc., etc."

My little speech! I ought to say: my little speeches. I had three in my repertory.

First. Little speech for towns, with a passage on liberty.

Second. Little speech for rural populations, with a passage in favor of free trade.

Third. Little speech for the manufacturing centers, with a passage against free trade.

I got confused once and I used in the country the passage I should have kept for the city. Fortunately this took place at a banquet, at dessert, and we were in such good spirits that no one was in a condition to understand. So no one noticed anything. The passage was in the middle of the speech, the beginning and the end would do for anybody; it was what is called a *passe-partout*.

Ah, what an existence I led from the tenth of April to the twenty-third of May! On the twenty-fourth, however, it was all over.

Elected, I was elected, and it only cost me sixty thousand francs; it seems it was for nothing.

In my commune and in the little adjoining hamlets, the vote was unanimous, enthusiastic, spontaneous. I had had no other canvasser than Caroline, who had redoubled her charities ; but outside of a radius of two or three leagues it was necessary to employ more elaborate means : distributions of banners, medals, pictures of his holiness, portraits of the emperor, etc. ; establishment of prizes for choral societies, for agricultural meetings, etc., etc. ; organization of banquets. This only cost me two francs a head, it is true, but when one has to provide food and drink during the entire period of preparation (five whole days before the election) for an entire district of thirty-five thousand inhabitants, one has no idea what it costs, until the day after the election.

So I was elected by means of my sixty thousand francs. I consoled myself somewhat, by saying : “ I shall have a salary of twelve thousand five hundred francs a year for six years and this will reimburse me. I shall have lost only the interest on my money.”

In this I deceived myself. My electors had learned the way to my purse ; they took good care not to forget it. Every morning I received an avalanche of letters : pleas for help, etc., etc. I had to give, give, give—and also run, run, run. Go to

see such a *directeur général*, such and such a minister. Secure the same place for twenty persons, etc., etc.

This is not all. Caroline's poor showed a remarkable increase. Her charities before the twenty-second of May, 1867, extended over only two or three little communes; after the twenty-second of May, they extended over the entire electoral district; nine cantons, twenty-four communes.

In the meanwhile, I arrived at the Chamber and selected my seat. So far I had had no difficulties. But what was my dismay when the discussions began! Floating debt, classification of parish roads, common funds, etc.

I understood nothing, nothing at all of these things, and I said to myself: "What shall I do when it comes to voting? I shall never dare; I will spend my six years in abstaining."

I confided my ignorance and my perplexities to my neighbor, who answered: "Come, you are not the only one! Even I, who have been here fifteen years, am very often not perfectly clear as to what's going on. And even those who have the floor do not always know too well what they are talking about. But that doesn't prevent their voting. Besides one ought never to abstain from voting; our constituents don't like it. They send us here to vote, and vote we must."

I followed this advice and set to voting; but I thought of an ingenious plan that left my conscience clear.

Whenever I understood nothing at all of what was going on or being said in the Chamber, I voted sometimes for and sometimes against.

This soon made a marked man of me.

Ah! ah! they said, there is a man who takes no side; he does not vote to order, he has an opinion of his own on every subject; he goes from right to left and from left to right.

They made inquiries about me, questioned one another. Who is this newcomer? They learned that I was the product of a candidateship costly but independent. A benevolent curiosity attended my first acts and every one wondered what I would do.

Parties formed about me and were scarcely formed when they split again, dividing and sub-dividing into sub-parties and counter-parties: right of the right, left of the left, left of the right center, etc., etc. From every side advances were made to me.

Granier de Cassagnac said to me: "Well, young man, are you one of us?" And Gambetta, whenever he passed near me, smiled very kindly. Propositions were not lacking: "Support this amendment. Won't you sign this petition?"

Signing anything was what especially alarmed

me ; it seemed to me that to place my signature at the bottom of a bill was to take an eternal, irrevocable vow. What would you have ? It was my *début* into political life. I did not know parliamentary ways and customs.

Nevertheless it was necessary to make an end of it and choose a party. I consulted Caroline ; she studied the make-up of the different groups and said to me :

“ It seems to me that this is the most respectable list. All the names are good, very good—but there are only eight.”

“ But it is a very good thing to be eight,” I answered ; “ with me there will be nine. A great many parties in the Chamber aren’t even as far along as that.”

“ Well then, join that one.”

I joined it and this is how I became member of my party. We placed ourselves at an equal distance from the right of the right of the left and the left of the left of the right. We are very well placed and in a most convenient position for all the little strategic evolutions.

We decided without loss of time that we would meet every week. “ Let us dine together, that will be the best way. Yes, but not at the Grand Hotel ; at the house of one of the party, it would be more

fitting." I proposed my house. It was most central, and it was at my house that we began our dinners. The first time we were only ten, Caroline and the nine of the party; but after deliberation, I was asked to invite to each dinner, beginning with the following week, a dozen deputies of every side. It was highly necessary to gain adherents. My political dinners have succeeded, and the last time there were twenty-two at table. Still another expense, my dear uncle, still another expense!

We have not yet issued our manifesto, we are preparing it; it will be very good; at once vague and explicit; the only thing is that we ought to be ten to sign it. It seems that there must be ten at least to form a real party. Why? I'm sure I don't know. Perhaps because there are ten departments. However, I hope we shall soon secure a tenth. They tell me to take great pains with my dinners; I am taking pains.

However, if expensive, this makes our existence pleasant and lively. I was accustoming myself very well to this kind of life; I said to myself: "Here I am, a deputy, member of a party; I shall have a little peace now." Alas! no, not yet!

At my dinner of May 7th, one of my colleagues said to me: "You are not uneasy about your re election to the *conseil général*?" "But I don't

belong to my *conseil général*." "You don't belong to your *conseil général*!" There was a universal exclamation of surprise from my twenty guests. "One must belong to one's *conseil général*; it is the finishing touch to a political position. Present yourself! present yourself!"

I tried to resist; I foresaw what would happen, but the head of our party declared warmly that I had no right to refuse to do what was an actual duty. There was nothing for me to do but submit, and, the first of June, Caroline and I betook ourselves to our electors. Caroline herself was beginning to be a little weary.

"You have made thorough inquiries, *mon ami*, have you not?" she asked. "There won't be anything after this? You will be all through when you have this?"

I reached Montarnesse. Then the music began. I was known, I had proved myself; people knew of what I was capable in election times. And then, I had two redoubtable opponents; the first, a man of that part of the country, very persuasive, very rich, who had prepared for his election long beforehand by force of money; the second, a stranger, a Parisian, who appealed to the worst passions of the people and who said brazenly to the electors: "Vote for me, and if I am elected there shall be no more

taxes, no levies, no military service, no anything; there will be universal happiness."

You can understand that I would rather spend a little more money than allow such things to be. Liberal, *à la rigueur*, yes; but revolutionary never!

I was elected at last, I defeated my two opponents, but at the cost of what efforts, what sacrifices!

There were breakfasts, dinners, suppers for a week, without interruption, throughout the entire length of the canton. A veritable *canton de Gemache*!

I had brought from Paris ten thousand francs, saying to myself: "Ten thousand francs for an election to the *conseil général*, twenty-five hundred voters, are surely enough."

It has reached thirty, my dear uncle, thirty. Everything is growing dearer; even universal suffrage is beginning to take account of its power and value; it feels itself corruptible.

I resume and I conclude. Five or six times you have very generously paid for my youthful follies. And what follies! You ought with all the more reason to come to my aid to-day. You cannot leave me to bear alone the weight of the heavy obligations honorably contracted in the service of my country.

Think of it well. We are perfectly peaceful now and shall be for a long time. As you know, I have no love for the imperial rule, but the brilliant success of the *plebiscitum* has given, there is no denying it, a new force to the government. This gives presage of long years of peace and stability. One can foresee clearly the splendid crowning of the edifice.

We shall certainly remain unmolested during the six years of our parliamentary term. Therefore, no elections before 1878; no district, greedy, famished, to be well provided with food and drink.

As for me, I have nothing more to wish for. All that a man can be, I am—mayor, deputy, *conseiller municipal*, *conseiller général*; married, and father of a family. All this, thanks to you, my dear uncle, thanks to your two excellent suggestions: politics and marriage.

Caroline adores you, the babies send kisses, and I myself am with all my heart,

Your very affectionate nephew,

GEORGES.

THE CHINESE EMBASSADOR.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

LUDOVIC HALEVY.

TRANSLATED BY

ANNIE W. AYER AND HELEN T. SLATE.



The Chinese Ambassador.

At the beginning of the year 1870, a number of French and English residents were massacred in China. Reparation was demanded. His excellency, Tchong Keou, tutor to the crown prince, vice-president of the war department, was sent to Europe as ambassador extraordinary to the English and French governments.

Tchong Keou has published lately in Pekin a very curious account of his trip. A friend of mine, who lives in Shanghai and who has the rare gift of reading Chinese like an open book, has sent me a faithful translation of a part of Tchong Keou's work.

HAVRE, Sept. 12, 1870.

I disembark, I make myself known. I am an ambassador from the emperor of China. I bring apologies to the emperor of the French and presents to the empress. There is no longer an emperor, there is no longer an empress. The republic is proclaimed. I am greatly embarrassed.

These apologies and presents destined for the empire, shall I present them to the republic?

HAVRE, Sept. 14, 1870.

All things considered, I will offer the apologies and keep the presents.

HAVRE, Sept. 26, 1870.

Yes, but where shall I go with these apologies? To whom shall I offer them? The government of the French republic is split into halves; there is the Paris half and the Tours half. I cannot think of going to Paris. Paris is besieged by the Prussians. I will go to Tours.

HAVRE, Oct. 2, 1870.

I have not been nor shall I go to Tours. I received yesterday a visit from the *Times* correspondent, a very pleasant and sensible man. I told him that I intended going to Tours.

"Tours, what are you going to do at Tours?"

"Present my master's apologies to the minister of foreign affairs of the French republic."

"But the minister isn't at Tours."

"Where is he?"

"Blockaded in Paris."

A minister of foreign affairs blockaded in a besieged city, struck me as being very extraordinary.

"And why," asked the *Times* correspondent, "are you bringing apologies to the French government?"

"Because we massacred some French residents."

"French residents! The thing isn't of the least consequence to-day. France no longer exists. You can, if you like, throw every one of the French residents into the sea."

"We also inadvertently massacred some English residents."

"You massacred some English residents! Oh, that's quite another thing! England is still a great nation. And do you bring apologies to Queen Victoria?"

"Yes, apologies and presents."

"Then go to London, go at once to London and pay no attention to France: there is no longer any France!"

The correspondent of the *Times* looked well pleased when he said: "There is no longer any France!"

LONDON, Oct. 10, 1870.

I have seen the queen of England. She received me very graciously. She accepted the apologies; she accepted the presents.

LONDON, Oct. 12, 1870.

Long conversation with Lord Granville, minister

of foreign affairs to the queen of England. I explained to his excellency that I intended to return at once to China, that I considered my French mission at an end since France no longer existed. Lord Granville said in reply :

“Do not go like this, you may be obliged to return sooner than you expect ; France is an extraordinary country and she can rise again very quickly. Wait until the close of the war and then you can carry your apologies to the regular government that France will select. Until then, remain in England. We shall be very glad to offer you our hospitality.”

LONDON, Nov. 3, 1870.

I did not return to China. I am waiting in London until the minister of foreign affairs at Paris escapes from the blockade and I can put my hand on the French government. There are a great many Parisians here who have fled from their country on account of the war. I dined yesterday with his royal highness, the Prince of Wales. Three *Parisiennes*, young, all three of them, and all three very pretty—took possession of me after dinner. We had a most interesting conversation in English.

“You are looking for the French government,” the first of the *Parisiennes* said to me, “the legiti

mate government ; why, it is here, in England, half an hour out of London. Go to-morrow to Waterloo station, buy a ticket for Chiselhurst, and there you will find Napoleon III., who is and has never ceased to be emperor of the French."

"Don't listen to her, *monsieur l'ambassadeur*," said the second laughing, "don't listen to her, she is a rabid *Bonapartiste*. Yes, indeed, the real ruler of France is in England, very near London, but not at Chiselhurst. It is not to Waterloo station you must go but to Victoria. It is not a ticket for Chiselhurst you must buy, but a ticket for Twickenham, and there, at Orleans House, you will find his royal highness, the Comte de Paris."

"Don't listen to her, *monsieur l'ambassadeur*," cried the third in her turn, "don't listen to her, she is a rank revolutionist. The Comte de Paris is not the heir to the throne of France. To find the legitimate king, you must go farther than Chiselhurst or Twickenham; you must go to Austria, to the Chateau de Froshdorf—the king of France is the grandson of Henry IV., the Comte de Chambord."

If I count aright, this makes three legitimate sovereigns, and all three deposed. We never had anything like it in China. Our ancient dynasty has had to fight against the invasion of the Mongols, and the insurrection of the Taipings, but three legit-

imate rulers for one country, one throne—one must come to Europe to see such things.

These three pretty *Parisiennes*, moreover, talked very gayly about all this and seemed to be the best friends in the world.

LONDON, Nov. 15, 1870.

As a sequel to my three Frenchwomen representing three different monarchies, I met at Lord Granville's this evening, three Frenchmen representing three different republics.

The first of these Frenchmen asked me why I did not go to Tours.

"You will find there," he said, "the authorized representatives of the French republic—and in addressing yourself to M. Gambetta, you will be addressing France."

"Don't do that, *monsieur l'ambassadeur*," cried the second Frenchman, "the real government of the true French republic is shut up in Paris. M. Jules Favre can alone, legally, receive your visit and your apologies."

"The republic of Paris is no better than the republic of Tours," said the third Frenchman. "If we have a republic in France, it is neither the republic of M. Gambetta nor the republic of M. Jules Favre."

"What republic is it then?"

"The republic of M. Thiers."

And thereupon, the three Frenchmen began to dispute among themselves. They grew very red, shouted with all their might, and gesticulated violently. The discussion over the three monarchies was much more pleasant and agreeable than the discussion over the republics.

In the course of the evening, each of these Frenchmen managed to whisper a few words in my ear.

"Don't listen to that partisan of the government of Paris," said the first. "He is a lawyer who has come here on a mission for M. Jules Favre. You understand, he has a large salary and he wishes to keep it."

"Don't listen to that partisan of the mock republic of M. Thiers," said the second, "he is only a monarchist, an Orleanist in disguise."

"Don't listen to that partisan of the republic of Tours," said the third, "he is a gentleman who has come to England to raise a loan for the government at Tours. As he expects to make a great deal of money——"

Here I am, if I calculate rightly, in the presence of six governments: three monarchies and three republics.

LONDON, Dec. 6, 1870.

I think that his excellency, M. de Bernstoff, Prussian ambassador to England, takes pleasure in

making fun of me : I never meet him but he asserts that Paris will capitulate the next day. The next day and Paris does not capitulate. This evening, however, his excellency was so positive that I think I may prepare to start for Paris.

PARIS, Feb. 20, 1871.

I did not leave until the tenth of February. I am in Paris at last—I traveled by short, very short stages. Villages burned ! Houses pillaged ! Forests ruined, roads torn up, bridges and railroads destroyed ! And these Europeans call us barbarians !

Among all these ruins, there was one the sight of which filled me with keenest joy. The Palais de Saint Cloud used to be the summer palace of the Emperor Napoleon. There is not one stone left upon another. I looked long and curiously at the blackened ruins of the chateau. The fragments of some antique Chinese vases were half hidden in the rubbish, among bits of marble and splinters of shell.

Where did these antique vases come from ? From the summer palace of our emperor perhaps, from that palace which was sacked, burned, destroyed by those French and English soldiers who came to bring civilization to us.

I was well received by the English, who heaped

me with invitations and attentions, but I hope, none the less, that Buckingham Palace and Windsor will also have their turn.

PARIS, Feb. 25, 1871.

I have written to M. Jules Favre to let him know that I have been waiting for six months to present the compliments and apologies of the emperor of China. M. Jules Favre answers that he is obliged to leave for Bordeaux. I am to have my audience the first of March.

PARIS, March 7, 1871.

Another letter from M. Jules Favre. He is expected at Frankfort by M. de Bismark. My audience is again postponed.

PARIS, March 17, 1871.

At last, to-morrow at four o'clock, I am to be received by M. Jules Favre, at the office of foreign affairs.

PARIS, March 18, 1871.

We dressed ourselves, I and my two secretaries, in our costumes of state, and we started at three o'clock accompanied by an interpreter. We arrived. The courtyard of the hotel was full of busy and excited people who came and went, carrying boxes and bundles. The interpreter, after exchanging a few words with an employé of the office, said to me :

“ Important events have been taking place, there

has been an insurrection. The government is forced to make another change of capital."

At this moment a door opened, and M. Jules Favre himself appeared with a big portfolio under his arm. He explained to the interpreter that I should have my audience at Versailles in a few days, and after making me a deep bow, which I returned, he started off at a run with his portfolio.

VERSAILLES, March 19, 1871.

I have had to leave Paris in all haste. There is a new government in Paris. This government is not that of any one of the monarchies nor of any one of the republics. It is a seventh combination and calls itself the *Commune*. This morning a crowd of armed men surrounded the hotel where I was stopping. It seems that the new minister of foreign affairs, the one of Paris and of the commune, would have charmed to receive a Chinese ambassador. They had come to take me. I had time to make my escape. It is not the minister of foreign affairs at Paris that I ought to see, it is the minister of foreign affairs at Versailles.

Mon dieu! how complicated all this is, and when shall I be able to put my hand on this inaccessible individual, who is now blockaded in Paris, now driven out of Paris?

VERSAILLES, April 6, 1871.

At last I had the honor of being received yesterday by his excellency and we talked of the occurrences in Paris.

"This insurrection," said M. Jules Favre, "is the most formidable and extraordinary insurrection that has ever broken out."

I could not let this huge historical error pass. I answered M. Jules Favre that in China, for thousands of years we had had socialists and socialists' insurrections; that the communists were merely the rude imitators of our Chinese Taïpings; that in 1230 we had had a siege of Nankin that had lasted seven years, etc., etc. In short, that these Europeans were only beginning our history over again with less grandeur and more barbarism.

VERSAILLES, May 15, 1871.

My mission is fulfilled; I can return to China; but all that I see here interests me infinitely. This civil war following immediately upon a foreign war is a very curious thing. This is an excellent opportunity for a Chinaman to study European civilization on the spot.

VERSAILLES, May 24, 1871.

Paris is burning, and from the terrace of the Chateau of Saint Cloud, in the midst of the ruins of

the palace, I spent the day in watching Paris burn. It is a dead city, ruined, annihilated.

PARIS, June 10, 1871.

Not at all. It is still the most beautiful city in Europe, the most brilliant, the gayest. I shall remain some time in Paris.

PARIS, June 29, 1871.

Yesterday, in the Bois de Boulogne, M. Thiers held a grand review of a hundred thousand men. Will there always be a France?

LITTLE MAX.

FROM THE FRENCH

OF

LUDOVIC HALEVY.

TRANSLATED BY

ANNIE W. AYER AND HELEN T. SLATE.

LITTLE MAX.

I HAD opened Mercier's *Premier Tableau de Paris*, the number before the Revolution—the one of 1789. We have had so many revolutions that one must take care to be explicit. This is what Mercier wrote on the subject of races :

“ You betake yourself to the plain of Gablons to see a lot of lean horses, reeking with foam, dash by like a flash at the end of six minutes, and then you discuss the results of these races with an air of wisdom and importance that borders on the ridiculous.”

Mercier also makes note of a young dandy who was asked which he idolized more, horses or women. He reflected a little and answered :

“ I love women better, but I have more respect for horses.”

Such were the sportsmen of the plain of Gablons in 1780 ; such are the sportsmen of the plain of Chantilly and the hippodrome of Longchamps in 1880.

One evening last week I happened to meet in society some very agreeable young fellows. They

began to discuss the results of the spring races. As I listened to them I was seized at once with admiration and sadness.

If such a horse had lost such a race on such a day, it was because he had coughed in the morning, or had refused his oats, or the course had not suited him, etc. Then they talked of the *Prix* of a hundred thousand francs. It was no secret to any one that *Robert the Devil* had too much mettle; at all events it was a secret to me.

And what erudition! They knew whom *Beauminet* was by, and by whom *Bête à Chagrins*, and by whom *Robert the Devil*. They differed, however, on *Destrier*.

"*Le Destrier* is by *Trocadero*."

"No, *Le Destrier* is by *Flageolet*."

"Eh! *parbleu*! let us ask little Max. Little Max! Little Max!"

I saw little Max approaching. I have had the pleasure of knowing him for a long time. We are on the best of terms. The question was put to him and little Max answered immediately:

"By *Flageolet*! by *Flageolet*! How could you hesitate for a moment!"

He had a somewhat scandalized air, had little Max. He was disgusted at the ignorance of his comrades. I could not resist. I joined in the conversation and asked carelessly:

“Whom is the *Princess of Clèves* by?”

The *Princess of Clèves*? They looked questioningly at one another. They racked their brains. They knew no mare by that name. No, never, since they had followed the races, in any meeting either in Paris or in the provinces, had they seen on the programme the name of this *Princess of Clèves*. Their amazement redoubled when I said that I knew whom she was by—that she was by Mme. de La Fayette. This brood mare was equally unknown to them.

I had pity on their perplexity at last and admitted that this *Princess of Clèves* was a novel of the seventeenth century and that the author of this romance was Mme. de La Fayette. They breathed again; they were really relieved. They were ignorant of even the existence of a masterpiece of our language; that was nothing. But they would have blushed to be put at fault on the name of a racing mare. There are a great many young men like these to-day.

I regretted afterward that I had put too difficult a question to these sportsmen. I think I could have embarrassed them with a much simpler one. If I had asked them merely: “By whom was Louis XIV.?” they might have succeeded possibly in discovering Louis XIII., but they certainly would

have collapsed before Anne of Austria. And if I had gone on: "By whom Louis XV.?" emboldened by their success with Louis XIV., they might have said: "By Louis XIV."

Races and baccarat undoubtedly play too important a part in the lives of these gentlemen.

And I shall never understand why races, which are really nothing but an indirect kind of baccarat, should have certain privileges and exceptions.

A large number of newspapers announced with real sorrow that, on account of the bad weather, the receipts on the day of the *Grand Prix* had amounted to only *one hundred and seventy thousand francs*. That was all—on one single occasion. That is the total amount of the receipts during one good month of the *Comédie-Française*.

You will grant, I am sure, that the *Comédie-Française* has done as much for the glory of our country as the *Société des Courses*. One has some right then in demanding equality, at least, between these two institutions. Very well, this is what happens. There is a law of 1791 which, very wisely in my humble opinion, gave to the *Comédie-Française* precedence over the races. It required that the *Comédie-Française* and other theaters should give to the poor a tenth of their receipts. On races, public balls, café concerts, the tax was to be twenty-five per cent.

Do you know how this law has been enforced for almost a century? Oh, the ten per cent. on the theaters has always been exacted most scrupulously. But the public balls, races, and café concerts have not been treated with the same severity. They have never known the rigor of the law of 1791.

Here is an example. In this last month the *Comédie-Française* has taken in one hundred and seventy thousand francs. During this month have been given plays by Racine, Corneille, Molière, Beaumarchais, etc., etc.

The *Société des Courses* took in in one day, Sunday, June 6th, the same sum of one hundred and seventy thousand francs. Among the horses that ran were Joséphine, Pharamon, Gobsec, Volupté, Poulet, Patronille, Beauminet, Michel-Ange and Nonancourt.

The Bureau of Public Charities presents itself; it demands seventeen thousand francs of the *Comédie-Française* and demands of the *Société des Courses*, by way of principle, a merely nominal sum. I don't know but what it is twenty sous.

I regard this as perfectly monstrous and absurd. It is a good thing to encourage the species horse, but it seems to me, to encourage the species man is better still. One is quite as good as the other. In conclusion, it seems to me that "Le Cid" by Corneille

and "Tartufe" by Molière have done at least as much for the improvement of the human mind as *Beauminet* by Flageolet and *Bête à Chagrins* by Vertugadin have done for the improvement of the thoroughbred.

This said—and I am not sorry to have had a chance to say it—I will return to little Max. After the conversation about Flageolet and Mme. de LaFayette he sank down upon a couch; he remained there, silent, pensive, with an air of weariness and dejection. I seated myself beside him.

"You have just been making sport of us," he said. "Oh! I'm not angry with you. I do myself justice! I am as ignorant as a fish and at times I have regular fits of indignation at myself. I am seized with a rage for work, for study. I buy books, but the time for reading—where am I to find it? Where?"

"But it seems to me——"

"Yes, yes, I guess what you are thinking. Time never ought to be lacking for one who has nothing to do. Ah! it is because you do not know what the life of a man who has nothing to do is! My life! Shall I tell you what my life is?"

"Gladly."

"Very well, listen."

I listened and here is an exact report of little Max's story.

"I am going to begin with an absurdity, but I am obliged to state a ridiculous fact, an improbable fact, an extravagant fact! I am the fashion! From one end of the year to the other I am disputed over, wrangled over. Dinners, balls, *soirées*, country parties and shooting parties, charades and drawing-room comedies, etc., etc. A deluge of invitations. Every one wants me. There is no fête or entertainment possible without me, in a certain set.

Why? Ah, *par exemple*, I don't know in the least. I am not witty. No, no—I am not witty. I have a little flow of conversation and that is all! As to my ignorance, you yourself recognized it at once. It is beyond all belief. I had an awful time getting my baccalaureate. I had to go up four times. And must I admit it? I am not altogether strong in spelling even to-day. There are participles that fill me with dismay and from which I keep at a respectful distance in my letters.

And yet I am a success, yes, a very great success in society. I am in possession of a certain amount of notoriety in Paris. One morning, four or five years ago, I opened a newspaper. I had been present the evening before at a great wedding, and in the account of this great wedding I was astonished to discover my name! The following week my name appeared again, in connection with a first night!

Then, after that, in all the echoes of society's doings my name, always my name. My face had become familiar to the writers of the little Parisian chronicles.

I had become somebody ! I saw myself fêted, run after, sought after. To-day is the twelfth of June. Very well, will you believe that since the twenty-fifth of April I have dined in town every evening and that everywhere I have had the same elaborate dinner, the same *menu*, the same wines, the same people, the same conversation. We are a little flock of Parisians, young and old, turning always in the same circle, without ever being able to stop.

As for me, I am worn out ! Look at my face. In the evening, under gaslight, it will do fairly well, but in the morning it is shocking. I cannot eat, I cannot sleep. My doctor has been trying for two weeks to make me go to the baths. But I cannot, I cannot ! I shall not be free before the fifteenth of July !”

Little Max had reached this point when the charming Madame de Z—— went by, leaning on her husband's arm.

She paused an instant before little Max.

“To-morrow, at three o'clock,” she said, “don't forget.”

“At three o'clock,” he answered, “I shall be there.”

“Until to-morrow then.”

She moved away and little Max resumed his brilliant improvisation.

“Delightful woman, isn’t she? And so nice to me, so cordial. Ah! I believe that if I had had the time to spend on her this winter—but there—I have had no time. I have been obliged to postpone it till next winter.

“And this rendezvous for to-morrow. You needn’t imagine anything. It is at her upholsterer’s that I am to be at three o’clock, for a consultation. She wants to change the entire arrangement of her sal^{on}, so she came to me to ask my advice.

“This is one of my misfortunes! It is generally conceded that I have good taste, originality, that I am a connoisseur in *bibelots*, stuffs, horses, carriages, toilets, furniture, decoration of apartments, cookery and wines. It is largely owing to this that I have reached a position that astonishes even me.

“Listen, this will be my day to-morrow: In the morning, from nine to ten, I receive my tailor. At ten I am to ride with Madame L——. She wants my opinion on a horse that is recommended to her. At eleven I am due at B——’s, the carriage maker, to take a look at a carriage he is finishing for my friend R——; a carriage of most original make, an idea of my own. I return home and breakfast. At

two I go to Madame de M——'s dressmaker's. Madame de M—— is to have her portrait painted and she is hesitating between two gowns. I am to give my opinion. Then to Madame de Z——'s upholsterer's and there we shall spend two good hours. From there I must hurry to a meeting to arrange for some races in the provinces. I dine at the V——'s, who are trying a cook and want to know what I think of him. After that, I must go to a concert at the A——'s. This is not all. There is a little hop at the S——'s, and as they would be furious to know that I had been at the A——'s without having shown myself at their house I must go to the S——'s also.

"Isn't that a day? Do you know what I am going to do now to prepare for it? It is midnight. I am going to bed."

At this moment a whirlwind of satin, silk, and lace descended upon little Max. It was his cousin, Madame de B——.

"Max, come, come at once."

"Where?"

"With us, to the blue drawing-room. We are going to give a charade. We have piles of costumes. Cyprienne has thought of a splendid word. You are to play three delightful rôles: a senator, a *kroumir*, and a vender of *pastilles du sérail*."

"I am sorry, *ma chère*, but I can do nothing more. I am very tired. I am in no condition——"

"You can have the heart to make our charade a failure! I shall never forgive you. Come—come with me, come!"

She took his arm and led him off authoritatively. As he departed with a despairing air, he called out these last words to me:

"I forgot to tell you. I know how to act charades."

While little Max's abduction was taking place before my eyes, a passage from the "Confessions" of Jean Jacques Rousseau occurred to me. Speaking of life in society, where one suffers both the boredom of idleness and the torment of restraint, he exclaims:

"You call this idleness, it is the work of a convict."

Jean Jacques was right. It is sometimes very hard, this easy life of idleness. To have to amuse oneself always, always, always, without rest or respite! To have nothing else to do! To regard life as a huge, unending pleasure party!

In fact, it must be said and said very loudly, that the most bearable condition in the world is the condition of those who, having duties to fulfill, have a sense of these duties and a love for work.

In one of her letters Madame Sand wrote this sentence :

“ Never complain of work, however thankless, but accept it as a good thing ; the three-quarters of a life devoted to any duty whatsoever make the remaining quarter very strong and very much alive.”

But I have no duties to fulfill if I am alone, free, and rich. Very good ! it will be all the easier for you to create duties. Marry ! That poor devils should hesitate before marriage, I can understand, but the rich— *Allons donc !* Marriage is their real duty, their real luxury. Marry, bring up children, love them, busy yourself with their education, make good men of them, good Frenchmen. Try, and you will see that it is not quite so tiresome as it may seem to you.

And if marriage alarms you, if you cannot bring yourself to it, very well, do not marry. One has the right to remain a bachelor, but one has no right to live in absolute isolation from all duty and work. Find some occupation, have a taste for something, a passion, a mania. I except, of course, women and baccarat ; but there are many other things besides these.

Turn collector, buy books, manuscripts, engravings, medals, pictures. You have a chateau and

farms ; cultivate your land, raise cattle, sheep, hens. Become a member of the agricultural society of your *arrondissement*. Be the treasurer of some charitable institution. Be the secretary of the board of management of the public library of your commune.

Re-read the delightful scene in the first act of "Daniel Rochat ;" follow the advice of Miss Esther Henderson ; build workmen's houses, turn iron master ; drain, sow, plant. Stanley descended the Congo, ascend it. Go to the north pole. Repeat the voyage of Nordenskiöld. You will not be the first, but there is some merit in being the second. Do something, in short, do something.

Work, duty—these are the real pleasures of life. There are no inexhaustible joys except in the stern satisfaction of conscience and honor.

M. Renan has said so in his delightful way, in London, not long ago :

"I do not know what tells me that he who, without knowing why, out of pure nobility of spirit, chooses in this world the unproductive lot of doing right, has shown true wisdom, has found the true use of his life."

Yes, to do right, but not to do nothing, to live in complete idleness, to get up in the morning, or rather, to get up late, very late, look at yourself in

a glass and to have nothing to say to yourself but this :

“ It is I ! It is I indeed. I have slept well, I feel well, am fat and rosy. I shall go for a ride. But shall I wear my gray vest and blue trousers or my blue vest and gray trousers ? Here goes for the gray vest ! Yesterday I made the tour of the Bois from left to right ; to-day I shall make it from right to left. I shall come home. I shall breakfast. I shall sleep two hours in my reclining chair. I shall put on the brown frock coat that my tailor sent home yesterday, and I shall take a turn around the lake in my carriage. I shall come home again. Another change of toilet. Black dress coat, white tie. Shall dine at the B——’s ; one gets a good dinner there. They set the best table in Paris. I shall get away about ten o’clock, to see the dancing in the fourth act of “ Robert.” This is my life ! for I am good for nothing, nothing, nothing ! Yet I am no stupider than most people. I shall never make any use of the powers and intelligence that were given me by nature ; I never shall, never, never ! ”

It seems to me that it must be insupportable to be obliged to hold such conversations with oneself all one’s life.

You are rich ; all the better for you, but see that it may be all the better for the poor also.

There is a little book that used to be much read but is not read at all now, "An Essay on the Art of being Happy," by Joseph Droz.

Another little book is much needed to-day—an "Essay on the Art of being Rich."

June, 1880.

THE END.

A. L. Burt's Catalogue of Books for Young People by Popular Writers, 52- 58 Duane Street, New York ❧ ❧ ❧

BOOKS FOR BOYS.

Joe's Luck: A Boy's Adventures in California. By

HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

The story is chock full of stirring incidents, while the amusing situations are furnished by Joshua Bickford, from Pumpkin Eollow, and the fellow who modestly styles himself the "Rip-tail Roarer, from Pike Co., Missouri." Mr. Alger never writes a poor book, and "Joe's Luck" is certainly one of his best.

Tom the Bootblack; or, The Road to Success. By

HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

A bright, enterprising lad was Tom the Bootblack. He was not at all ashamed of his humble calling, though always on the lookout to better himself. The lad started for Cincinnati to look up his heritage. Mr. Grey, the uncle, did not hesitate to employ a ruffian to kill the lad. The plan failed, and Gilbert Grey, once Tom the bootblack, came into a comfortable fortune. This is one of Mr. Alger's best stories.

Dan the Newsboy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Dan Mordaunt and his mother live in a poor tenement, and the lad is pluckily trying to make ends meet by selling papers in the streets of New York. A little heiress of six years is confided to the care of the Mordaunts. The child is kidnapped and Dan tracks the child to the house where she is hidden, and rescues her. The wealthy aunt of the little heiress is so delighted with Dan's courage and many good qualities that she adopts him as her heir.

Tony the Hero: A Brave Boy's Adventure with a Tramp. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Tony, a sturdy bright-eyed boy of fourteen, is under the control of Rudolph Rugg, a thorough rascal. After much abuse Tony runs away and gets a job as stable boy in a country hotel. Tony is heir to a large estate. Rudolph for a consideration hunts up Tony and throws him down a deep well. Of course Tony escapes from the fate provided for him, and by a brave act, a rich friend secures his rights and Tony is prosperous. A very entertaining book.

The Errand Boy; or, How Phil Brent Won Success.

By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth illustrated, price \$1.00.

The career of "The Errand Boy" embraces the city adventures of a smart country lad. Philip was brought up by a kind-hearted innkeeper named Brent. The death of Mrs. Brent paved the way for the hero's subsequent troubles. A retired merchant in New York secures him the situation of errand boy, and thereafter stands as his friend.

Tom Temple's Career. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Tom Temple is a bright, self-reliant lad. He leaves Plympton village to seek work in New York, whence he undertakes an important mission to California. Some of his adventures in the far west are so startling that the reader will scarcely close the book until the last page shall have been reached. The tale is written in Mr. Alger's most fascinating style.

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BOOKS FOR BOYS.

Frank Fowler, the Cash Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Frank Fowler, a poor boy, bravely determines to make a living for himself and his foster-sister Grace. Going to New York he obtains a situation as cash boy in a dry goods store. He renders a service to a wealthy old gentleman who takes a fancy to the lad, and thereafter helps the lad to gain success and fortune.

Tom Thatcher's Fortune. By HORATIO ALGER, JR.

12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Tom Thatcher is a brave, ambitious, unselfish boy. He supports his mother and sister on meagre wages earned as a shoe-pegger in John Simpson's factory. Tom is discharged from the factory and starts overland for California. He meets with many adventures. The story is told in a way which has made Mr. Alger's name a household word in so many homes.

The Train Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Paul Palmer was a wide-awake boy of sixteen who supported his mother and sister by selling books and papers on the Chicago and Milwaukee Railroad. He detects a young man in the act of picking the pocket of a young lady. In a railway accident many passengers are killed, but Paul is fortunate enough to assist a Chicago merchant, who out of gratitude takes him into his employ. Paul succeeds with tact and judgment and is well started on the road to business prominence.

Mark Mason's Victory. The Trials and Triumphs of a Telegraph Boy. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Mark Mason, the telegraph boy, was a sturdy, honest lad, who pluckily won his way to success by his honest manly efforts under many difficulties. This story will please the very large class of boys who regard Mr. Alger as a favorite author.

A Debt of Honor. The Story of Gerald Lane's Success in the Far West. By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

The story of Gerald Lane and the account of the many trials and disappointments which he passed through before he attained success, will interest all boys who have read the previous stories of this delightful author.

Ben Bruce. Scenes in the Life of a Bowery Newsboy.

By HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Ben Bruce was a brave, manly, generous boy. The story of his efforts, and many seeming failures and disappointments, and his final success, are most interesting to all readers. The tale is written in Mr. Alger's most fascinating style.

The Castaways; or, On the Florida Reefs. By JAMES

OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

This tale smacks of the salt sea. From the moment that the Sea Queen leaves lower New York bay till the breeze leaves her becalmed off the coast of Florida, one can almost hear the whistle of the wind through her rigging, the creak of her straining cordage as she heels to the leeward. The adventures of Ben Clark, the hero of the story and Jake the cook, cannot fail to charm the reader. As a writer for young people Mr. Otis is a prime favorite.

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Wrecked on Spider Island; or, How Ned Rogers Found

the Treasure. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Ned Rogers, a "down-east" plucky lad ships as cabin boy to earn a livelihood. Ned is marooned on Spider Island, and while there discovers a wreck submerged in the sand, and finds a considerable amount of treasure. The capture of the treasure and the incidents of the voyage serve to make as entertaining a story of sea-life as the most captious boy could desire.

The Search for the Silver City: A Tale of Adventure in

Yucatan. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Two lads, Teddy Wright and Neal Emery, embark on the steam yacht Day Dream for a cruise to the tropics. The yacht is destroyed by fire, and then the boat is cast upon the coast of Yucatan. They hear of the wonderful Silver City, of the Chan Santa Cruz Indians, and with the help of a faithful Indian ally carry off a number of the golden images from the temples. Pursued with relentless vigor at last their escape is effected in an astonishing manner. The story is so full of exciting incidents that the reader is quite carried away with the novelty and realism of the narrative.

A Runaway Brig; or, An Accidental Cruise. By

JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

This is a sea tale, and the reader can look out upon the wide shimmering sea as it flashes back the sunlight, and imagine himself afloat with Harry Vandyne, Walter Morse, Jim Libby and that old shell-back, Bob Brace, on the brig Bonita. The boys discover a mysterious document which enables them to find a buried treasure. They are stranded on an island and at last are rescued with the treasure. The boys are sure to be fascinated with this entertaining story.

The Treasure Finders: A Boy's Adventures in

Nicaragua. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

Roy and Dean Coloney, with their guide Tongla, leave their father's indigo plantation to visit the wonderful ruins of an ancient city. The boys eagerly explore the temples of an extinct race and discover three golden images cunningly hidden away. They escape with the greatest difficulty. Eventually they reach safety with their golden prizes. We doubt if there ever was written a more entertaining story than "The Treasure Finders."

Jack, the Hunchback. A Story of the Coast of Maine.

By JAMES OTIS. Price \$1.00.

This is the story of a little hunchback who lived on Cape Elizabeth, on the coast of Maine. His trials and successes are most interesting. From first to last nothing stays the interest of the narrative. It bears us along as on a stream whose current varies in direction, but never loses its force.

With Washington at Monmouth: A Story of Three

Philadelphia Boys. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olive edges, illustrated, price \$1.50.

Three Philadelphia lads assist the American spies and make regular and frequent visits to Valley Forge in the Winter while the British occupied the city. The story abounds with pictures of Colonial life skillfully drawn, and the glimpses of Washington's soldiers which are given show that the work has not been hastily done, or without considerable study. The story is wholesome and patriotic in tone, as are all of Mr. Otis' works.

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BOOKS FOR BOYS.

With Lafayette at Yorktown: A Story of How Two Boys Joined the Continental Army. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olive edges, illustrated, price \$1.50.

Two lads from Portsmouth, N. H., attempt to enlist in the Colonial Army, and are given employment as spies. There is no lack of exciting incidents which the youthful reader craves, but it is healthful excitement brimming with facts which every boy should be familiar with, and while the reader is following the adventures of Ben Jaffrays and Ned Allen he is acquiring a fund of historical lore which will remain in his memory long after that which he has memorized from text-books has been forgotten.

At the Siege of Havana. Being the Experiences of Three Boys Serving under Israel Putnam in 1762. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olive edges, illustrated, price \$1.50.

"At the Siege of Havana" deals with that portion of the island's history when the English king captured the capital, thanks to the assistance given by the troops from New England, led in part by Col. Israel Putnam.

The principal characters are Darius Lunt, the lad who, represented as telling the story, and his comrades, Robert Clement and Nicholas Vallet. Colonel Putnam also figures to considerable extent, necessarily, in the tale, and the whole forms one of the most readable stories founded on historical facts.

The Defense of Fort Henry. A Story of Wheeling Creek in 1777. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olive edges, illustrated, price \$1.50.

Nowhere in the history of our country can be found more heroic or thrilling incidents than in the story of those brave men and women who founded the settlement of Wheeling in the Colony of Virginia. The recital of what Elizabeth Zane did is in itself as heroic a story as can be imagined. The wondrous bravery displayed by Major McCulloch and his gallant comrades, the sufferings of the colonists and their sacrifice of blood and life, stir the blood of old as well as young readers.

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With Warren at Bunker Hill. A Story of the Siege of Boston. By JAMES OTIS. 12mo, ornamental cloth, olive edges, illustrated, price \$1.50.

"This is a tale of the siege of Boston, which opens on the day after the doings at Lexington and Concord, with a description of home life in Boston, introduces the reader to the British camp at Charlestown, shows Gen. Warren at home, describes what a boy thought of the battle of Bunker Hill, and closes with the raising of the siege. The three heroes, George Wentworth, Ben Scarlett and an old ropemaker, incur the enmity of a young Tory, who causes them many adventures the boys will like to read."—*Detroit Free Press*.

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With the Swamp Fox. The Story of General Marion's

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In the history of our country there is no more thrilling story than that of the work done on the Mississippi river by a handful of frontiersmen. Mr. Otis takes the reader on that famous expedition from the arrival of Major Clarke's force at Corn Island, until Kaskaskia was captured. He relates that part of Simon Kenton's life history which is not usually touched upon either by the historian or the story teller. This is one of the most entertaining books for young people which has been published.

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A Traitor's Escape. A Story of the Attempt to Seize

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"This is a tale with stirring scenes depicted in each chapter, bringing clearly before the mind the glorious deeds of the early settlers in this country. In an historical work dealing with this country's past, no plot can hold the attention closer than this one, which describes the attempt and partial success of Benedict Arnold's escape to New York, where he remained as the guest of Sir Henry Clinton. All those who actually figured in the arrest of the traitor, as well as Gen. Washington, are included as characters."—*Albany Union*.

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